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**Printed by J. L. Cox and Sons, 75, Great Queen Street,  
Lincoln's-Inn Fields.**













# Y O U R L I F E.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF

“MY LIFE, BY AN EX-DISSENTER.”

And passing rich with forty pounds a year

LONDON:

JAMES FRASER, REGENT STREET.

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M.DCCC.XLI.

vestries or the churches themselves. Let them be taught to understand and feel what is required for the Church, what the Church is in need of; let them be made acquainted with Church history and Church statistics; let them be shown how the rights of the Church have been taken from her, how the sphere of Church influence has been diminished, how the revenues of the Church have been spoliated, and how it is proposed to remedy past wrongs and prevent future evils, and millions of signatures would be volunteered to an almost countless number of petitions to both Houses of Parliament, and to addresses to the Queen in behalf of Church extension, Church protection, and Church influence. Debates are unnecessary—discussions are unavailing—the dissenters are not asked to sign or to petition—but those who approve of and love the national religion of the country, should be called on to testify their approbation and regard. Nor should the refusal of the legislature or of the government to listen to the prayers of millions of Churchmen, awakened from their long slumber and inaction, destroy the hopes, diminish the zeal, or daunt the energies of the clergy and laity. Let the unwearied perseverance of Papists and dissenters be imitated by Churchmen. Whilst the former devote their energies to destruction, let Episcopalians exert theirs for

conservation :—but let the zeal and activity of the latter at least equal the former. Year after year, session after session, let the petitions and addresses be renewed. Let motions be repeatedly made in parliament. Let books, pamphlets, and tracts be written and circulated on Church statistics, and on Church wants. Let men's minds become enlightened on these topics. Let not the present deplorable state of ignorance as to these subjects be allowed to continue. • Let there be a much closer union than there has ever yet been between the clergy and laity. Let not lay influence and effort be repulsed, or received with coldness, but let the lay members be encouraged, cheered, and thanked by those, who without them can effect so little for any of the objects now so much required to secure Church influence, extension, and prosperity. It is one of the favourite terms of the worst and most artful, selfish, and unprincipled deceivers of modern times, “ *Let us have a rally for old Ireland.*” Here again let his cry, but not his spirit, be adopted—and let those who love the Church of this country cry—aye, so loudly, and so longly, that it shall be heard from the Isles of Orkney, where the huge waves of the Northern Ocean dash against their rocks, to the calm and warm coast of Devon's peaceful shores—“ **A RALLY FOR THE CHURCH !** ” That “ *rally* ” will not take place, how-

ever, till the clergy and laity shall meet more frequently, oftener come in contact ; and this will not be done without the former lead the way, and press upon the latter, as they ought to do, must do, will do, the claims of the Church upon all her members.

One means of helping on this movement would be the establishment of a "*Church Statistical Society*." Let every beneficed or unbeneficed clergyman in the country be considered a member—treated as one—and have forwarded to him *gratuitously*, every three months, the papers of the institution. Let these papers be *full* of statistics, no phrases, no declamation, but facts. All the facts are in favour of the Church, and it is only ignorance of these facts that the Church has to dread. The adequate funds for this society would soon be supplied. Let those of the clergy who can afford it give a sovereign per annum ; but let the annual subscription be fixed at *five shillings*. They can be transmitted by post-office orders, and the cost of collection will thus be small. The sale of the publications of the society to laymen, and to the public generally, will at once help on the funds ; and the object to be attained, *i. e.* the information of all classes as to the state and prospects of the Church, will be secured. Another society might be formed which would require small



pecuniary means, and would be 'eminently beneficial—a "*Church Historical Society*." Let popular books be written, and tracts be circulated on Church *history*, by such an association. If the books and tracts were well and carefully written, the profits of their sale would help to cover the expense of gratuitous circulation among the clergy. Such works would teach men what the Church *has done* for Britain and the world; and we should hear no more of whole districts of people frequenting a dissenting meeting-house, or of others becoming Papists, without one of them being able to state either what were dissenting, Papist, or Church of England principles. There is a *third* society which ought to be established and acted upon—" *The Church and State Defence Society*." This society might also be carried on with small means. There is a Society for *Useful Knowledge*, and a Society for *Christian Knowledge*; but there ought to be a Society for *Church Knowledge*; and this society should defend Church establishments, make known their advantages, seek to clear up all doubts respecting them, expose the inadequacy and insufficiency of voluntary churches, and of the voluntary principle; and demonstrate in every form and way the benefits which result to the government, the institutions, and the people of a country where Christianity is part and parcel of the

law of the land. This society should watch all measures in and out of parliament which tend directly or indirectly to infringe on Church influence, Church rights, Church revenues, Church power, and Church supremacy. The dissenters of *all denominations* established a society to defend dissenters and to attack the Church; and they called it "The Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty." The Church should have *its* institution, not to attack the dissenters, but to defend itself. Such societies as these would tend materially, and at very little expense, to assist in bringing about that "*rally for the Church*" which would not merely paralyze dissent, but secure to the national religion of the country the attention, love, and aid of its friends, and even the respect of its opponents. They would show to the enemies of episcopacy that though the Church had for a long time slumbered, she was at last awake, and that future efforts to intimidate, weaken, or crush her, would be wholly unavailing.

It is time that, abroad as well as at home, the constitution and government, discipline and worship of the Church of England, should be known and regarded. If the French and German Protestants had been blessed with such a Church hierarchy, and with such liturgical offices as those existing in this country, Protestantism would not only have extended

far wider, but what is of still more importance, it would have exercised a more effectual influence over the hearts and lives of its adherents, and would perhaps have been now the prevailing religion in the greatest portion of Europe. The inadequacy of the voluntary church system to supply the place of a State establishment as a means of providing religious instruction for the great body of a people is nowhere so amply proved as in the United States of America : and it is therefore by no means surprising that an attachment to episcopacy and to the Anglican liturgy is there gaining ground. How much more general would be this feeling if Churchmen were as zealous for truth, as are dissenters for error.

It must not, however, be imagined that what is styled in popular parlance "*Church reform*," is either vindicated or demanded by the author of these pages. There is nothing which requires *reformation* in the ordinary phraseology of the day ; but what is required, and what is proposed, is this, and nothing more than this, *viz.* that the principles upon which the Church was founded should be carried out—not checked, not restrained, not altered, not modified, but carried out. It is *episcopacy*—it is a *parochial system of clergy*—it is an adequate number of *bishops*—it is a proportionate allotment of people to

ministers, and of ministers to people, which are required; and all other measures, suggested or desired, are made with the sole view of following up, and following out, *old Church principles*.

There are some persons indeed who boast of their love for the Church, and yet attack its clergy, seek to establish a sort of inquisitorial invasion of the privacy of their dwellings, and by their language to those, whose doctrinal opinions are not in harmony with their own, show that their view of Church discipline is nothing better than a system of annoyance towards the Church ministers. Corrective discipline has seldom been withheld in the history of the Church, except, indeed, when Papal Rome got possession of the old English Catholic temples; and those who are the most noisy in requiring its enforcement would be, in many cases, among the first to suffer from its penalties. In no period of the English Church had she so moral, social, religious, and truly evangelical and devoted a body of clergy as at the present moment. The independence of a clergyman is essential to his usefulness; and the discipline of the Church of England needs no other change than, if it be possible, an increasing vigilance on the part of the bishops as to those to whom they administer the rite of ordination. But how can they do even this, whilst weighed down with such a mass of oppressive duties? The demands

made by the enemies of the Church of England for the abolition of Ecclesiastical Courts are sinister and sad. Even those who require what they call their *reform*, have given too many proofs, that they are actuated by a bad spirit. To ask that courts be established to try the clergy, as courts-martial are framed to try the foot or horse soldier, is a gratuitous insult to the Church and its ministers. The clergy are not faultless. No. The clergy are men. Yes. Sometimes they commit offences. They do;—and are answerable to the civil and criminal tribunals of the land. Alas! in some cases their conduct requires the loss of their gowns. When this is proved, they wear them no longer; how abundantly do the late proceedings against the Dean of York demonstrate the efficiency of the present regulations. The present discipline and the present courts are sufficient. No church in Christendom can exhibit such a body of moral men, to say nothing of their piety, and zeal, as can the Church of England.

The compilation of a body of ecclesiastical law is another of the demands of Church reformers. Since Napoleon framed in France the codes bearing his name, there has been lurking in the public mind a love of codification. But the experience of the last thirty years has shown to France, that though one very thick volume may profess to contain all the pro-

visions necessary for the varied cases brought under civil and criminal jurisprudence, it is by no means adequate for that purpose; and the decisions made during that period on the different readings to be given to almost every really important section of the code, have proved that it is impossible to frame any code to meet the perpetually changing circumstances of human life, and the ever-fluctuating character of human associations. What matters it whether the synodical constitutions of Otho and Othobon, or the laws of Elizabeth or Victoria, be in force, and together regulate the Church, if they regulate her well? and what merit is there in a new law over an old one, if the old one works well? When the opinion of Henry VIII. on the necessity for the compilation of a body of ecclesiastical laws is cited, it would seem that the friends of Church reform are sadly puzzled to find out authorities. To the measures of that prince, and afterwards of Elizabeth, do we owe, in a great measure, the present state of Church deficiency and of want of endowments. Would these Church reformers now be satisfied with the code said to have been prepared by Cranmer and placed before Edward VI.? Most assuredly not. Then why refer to it? Or will these reformers be satisfied with the proposed “*Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*” of the reign of Queen Elizabeth? Decidedly not. They

wish for something more modern, and “*suited to the spirit of the times.*” But the Church has nothing to do with “*the spirit of the times ;*” it has only to do with the spirit of pure religion. Because the constitutions and canons by which the Church is now governed were made in the Convocation of the province of Canterbury in 1603, and ratified by King James I., is this any reason for their alteration? A church, and above all a *National Church*, is not to be placed on the same footing as insurance companies, turnpike trusts, or railroads. Religion, at least the *Christian* religion, is not changing in its character, fickle in its affections, or uncertain in its principles. The laws of its churches are not like the regulations of dissenting meeting-houses, to be adapted to the tastes of the deacons or of the communicants for the time being; and when Lord Bacon complained (if he did so) that the ecclesiastical laws had received no alterations for five-and-forty years, he wrote what seldom happened to him, a most unwise and unprofitable sentence. Unity of discipline is not to be attained or preserved by codification; but by that close affinity of discipline to both worship and doctrine which exists at present.

An interference with Church endowments is another of the cries of Church reformers. But no true friend of his Church will hear of such a measure. There

has been Church robbery enough already. The prebendal changes already effected have caused more tears than smiles, and more sighs than joy. The cry against what are called sinecure rectories is senseless and hollow-hearted; and those who, because the Bishop of Down and Connor may have thought wise to consent to certain measures in his Irish diocese, therefore call for a general proceeding of a similar character for the English Church, show that at least they are not endowed with the power of comparison.

Those who ask that "sinecures" should be annexed to "ill-endowed parochial benefices," are ignorant of the character of the clergy, of the spirit of the Church constitution, of the principle of preserving some prizes for great merit, and above all of the duty under which Churchmen are now laid not to call for the diminution of Church endowments, or the curtailment of clerical comforts, but for the augmentation of Church revenues, and of clerical influence. The dissenting, or the worldly cry, that public opinion is opposed to such augmentation, and is in hostility to the Church, is an exaggerated statement. They say that public opinion has at all times had a claim—a claim both of power and of right—to be treated with respect; and that, in the present day, public opinion is possessed of a weight and in-



fluence which it never possessed at any former period. But what is public opinion? and above all, with reference to the Church? That public opinion which would have this "power" and this "right" to demand that it be treated with respect, would not be the opinion of the mass of the people, but of the educated members of the Church of England, and will any one assert that the majority of these educated members desire what is called Ecclesiastical Reform?

The attacks made on pluralities are scarcely less specious. Not indeed that pluralities would be either necessary or desirable, if the episcopal and parochial system of the Church were fully carried out as proposed in the preceding pages. But when the poverty of the Church is one of the great causes of her weakness and want of present efficiency, it is a very odd proposal "to rob Peter to pay Paul," robbing both and paying neither. We are told that Lord Bacon thought it a thing that hardly could receive just defence, "that men should live of the flock they do not feed, or of the altar at which they do not serve;" but there is another thing that is still less susceptible of defence, and that is, that men should *not* live of the flock they *do* feed, or of the altar at which they *do* serve. When this evil shall be remedied the one of pluralities will cease. Church

reformers busy themselves much about reducing, but never about augmenting, the revenues of the clergy, and yet they know that there are more than 1,000 livings under £60 per annum, and 422 under £30. They should also know that if all the revenues of all the parochial clergy could be put together into hotchpot, no one would receive as large an income as a solicitor's managing clerk, or a nobleman's land steward. Dr. Prideaux's five-mile distance measure would satisfy some reformers, whilst others go the length of saying, that as in Henry VIII.'s time no one holding an £8 benefice could take a second without a dispensation, therefore that the law should be enforced. The best answer to which piece of folly is, then let the clergy have wheat at eight shillings the quarter. • •

Those who love honours without labour, and privileges without merit, have also cried out for some reform of the Church dignities. They have got hold of certain figures and round sums, and because the Archbishop of Canterbury has £17,000 per annum, and the Bishop of London £11,700, they cry out "shame!" Yes, shame indeed!—but the shame is that they have *so little*. And these "shame" criers never think of complaining that the Bishop of Llandaff has but £1,000, the Bishop of Chester but £3,250, the Bishop of Exeter but £2,700, of Oxford

but £2,400, of Rochester but £1,459, of St. David's but £2,500, and of Sodor and Man but £2,000.

These are facts and figures which never disturb the consciences of these, nevertheless, "lovers and true sons of the Church." There are others who preach against commendams; but to this we say—1st, increase the bishoprics; 2nd, augment the incomes; 3rd, diminish the duties; and then, 4th, talk about commendams. Let the horse be put *before*, and not *after* the cart. There is one amendment which they never refer to, and that is the increase of archdeacons. Let these be greatly augmented, and their remuneration still further be improved. This would be to follow up and follow out the episcopal and parochial system.

It is disgraceful to the government and the parliament, as well as to the people of this country, that the archdeacons of England are even still so badly paid. In like manner let rural deans be general, and let them *be paid*. Their offices are useful, laborious, and in some cases even expensive. To add to their number, and to offer a just and fair recompense for their toils, would again be following out the principles of our episcopal and parochial Church.

These rough-shod reformers of the Church demand also the total removal of the Athanasian Creed;

or of what they style its damnatory clauses. “Oh ye generation of vipers,” said Christ, “how shall ye escape the damnation of hell?” “Except ye believe, ye shall all likewise perish.” “He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.” This was the language not of unkind and uncharitable men, but of Him who spake as never man spake, and of his faithful and devoted apostle Saint Paul.

The phrase “most religious king” is offensive also to their ears. But why? Because uneducated or ignorant men do not know that the phrase is made use of in the same manner as “most excellent,” “most noble,” and “most worthy,” are used by the evangelist and the apostle. Others desire that the order of the lessons should be changed, because some of the phrases they contain are offensive to *delicate ears*, which objection is in perfect harmony with a Bible now announced in the newspapers, as about to be published, which is to be freed from all *improper language*! and adapted to *family reading*! There is but one step between this and blasphemy. They wish the Bible to be dissected *by authority*, to gratify these sensitive Christian professors; as though there could be any authority superior to the Creator of the heavens and the earth. •No wonder that the services of the Church are too long to please these

lukewarm Churchmen, and that the Lord's Prayer is too often repeated for their easily satisfied consciences. These same lovers of short services and reformed Bibles, who would render the use of the Book of Common Prayer optional, yet insist on no discretion being left to the clergy in the occasional church offices; whilst in the spirit of contradiction and inconsistency, so common to all innovators, they would yet give to bishops the power of dispensing with the rubrics ! The marriage office is not select and choice enough in its expressions to suit their notions of "modern delicacy;" and the allusions to the spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and his Church is unpalatable to these extraordinary objectors. The absolution in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, and the eloquent and pious hope expressed in the Burial Service, they would also expunge; and spiritual discipline, instead of being insisted on as essential, is by them represented as unsuited to the age in which we live.

To these varied demands for change for the sake of change, and to others of a similar character, equally demonstrative of a restless and disturbing spirit, there is one general reply : "The Church *has* worked well." It has existed, with its present discipline, laws, pluralities, dignities, service, offices, and edifices, since the period of the Reforma-

tion—and what has it effected? It has gradually destroyed the *moral* force of Popery over the minds of the inhabitants of this country, although Popery is now engaged in a mighty effort to contest the advantages of which it has been *morally* deprived. It has civilized, by the constant action of its moral and religious bearing, the whole population of the land; it has given a moral and religious character to the public mind; it has by degrees brought about the repeal of sanguinary laws and an oppressive penal code; it has infiltrated itself into the very bowels of human society, encouraging decency, cleanliness, social habits, and family comforts and life; it has contributed powerfully to raise the character of woman and to ameliorate her former position; it has perpetuated a parochial system of religious instruction, which—though by the efflux of time and the vast augmentation of the population it has become less efficient than it will be when bishops, clergy, and churches shall become more numerous—has yet worked most admirably and gloriously throughout the land; it has raised by its parochial, national, and Sunday schools, the character of the working classes; it has, by its distribution of Bibles, Prayer-books, and homilies, given a private as well as a public character to the religion of the people of these realms; it has been the honoured instrument of opposing by its Chris-

tian conservatism the vitiating principles of multi-form sectarians, as well as the dangerous and destructive dogmas of political agitators and social invaders; it has given to all Christendom the most learned, wise, pure, and evangelical body of sound and practical theology existing in the world; it has neither neglected the inhabitants of the mountain or the moor, of the prison, the workhouse, the cabin, the cell, the garret, the ships, the canal-boats, the roaming population of gipsies, or the young depraved victims of overworking manufactories; and to other and far-distant climes, as well as to the colonies, the navy, and the army of our own country, it has carried the glorious truths and the imperishable consolations of vital Christianity.

The only "*reform*" required by such a Church is to remove all obstacles to its spread, and to carry out with energy its own principles. The most enlightened philosophers, the most distinguished divines, the most scientific benefactors of their country, the most able statesmen, warriors, judges, poets, historians, men of letters and of the arts, during the last three hundred years, have been members of her communion; and though here and there some bright constellation has appeared amidst the general darkness and gloom of sectarianism, papacy, and infidelity, yet who, with three centuries of British history

before them, will dare to deny the fact, that the learning, talent, science, virtue, morals, patriotism, and piety of the country, have been incomparably most eminent and distinguished in the members of the Church of England? And whenever the day shall arrive that the government and the parliament of this country shall be compelled or induced by the middling and upper classes to aid in the carrying out the constitution of the Church, by providing a sufficient number of bishops, of churches, of clergy, of glebe houses, and of schools, to meet the wants of a *trebled* population: there will no longer be complaints of the increase of dissent, of the progress of Popery, or of the invention of new schemes of anti-social, or anti-Christian error. To assist in bringing about this movement "*YOUR LIFE*" has been written; and its author can therefore solicit for its success the aid of the clergy, the prayers of the Church, and the benediction of the *Most High*!





## INTRODUCTION.

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No book should be published by a Churchman, when a Christian, without a distinct object to be accomplished; and an obvious, even though remote, result to be obtained by its publication. It may be to record historical facts, which shall develop great principles; or to make known individual history, as exemplifying the final triumph, or temporary defeat, of important truths; or to encourage personal piety; or to remove doubts and difficulties as to some points of Christian doctrine and duty; or to stir up the Church when sluggish or lifeless; or to keep within bounds an ardour which may not be in harmony with the quiet and peaceful institutions of pure and undefiled religion. But whether it be historical, biographical, devotional, or experimental in its character, the book will in all cases, when written conscientiously and wisely, bear on some great point, instruct on some question of doubt or disputation, raise men's minds to the consideration of a new, or to the re-con-

sideration of an old topic of importance and interest, conduct them to some certain and positive result, removing all that is vague and hesitating, and establishing some positions which are true and impregnable.

What then is the object of “*Your Life?*” That of “*My Life*” was obvious; it was written to come to the aid of the Church against *Schism*. But what is the purpose of “*Your Life?*” It is not less distinct; it is written to assist in re-establishing in the minds and hearts of men in this country a respect and love for the one only true Catholic and Apostolic Church of Great Britain! “*My Life*” had to fight the battle with unbridled private judgment, and unauthorized and erroneous rules of faith; “*Your Life*” has to contend not only with error in principle out of the Church, but with error of practice, with neglect of Church doctrines, discipline, and laws; with false liberality; with cold formalism; with semi-dissenterism in the heart of the Church itself; and with an awful disregard on the part both of governors and people of those sound episcopal rules and regulations which, if acted upon uniformly with zeal and piety, would tend to diminish, if not destroy, the various errors now existing in this country by rallying the majority of true Christians round the standard of a Protestant, National, Episcopal, and Scriptural Church. In the

one case, the Church was defended against her violent and external foes; in the other, she is cautioned against her less violent but internal enemies. “The Church—the Church!” was the watchword of “*My Life*.” The WHOLE Church, the ANCIENT Church, the ANGLICAN Church, the CATHOLIC Church, the PAROCHIAL Church, the EPISCOPAL Church, is the cry of the present volume. Not half a Church, not the voluntary principle introduced into the Church, not a Popish Church, not a dissenter’s Church, not a divided Church, not a doubtful and trimming Church, not an apologizing Church, not a fearful and conceding Church, not a hesitating and alarmed Church, not a persecuting or tyrannical Church, not an intolerant and illiberal Church; not a Church in a crouching, not a Church in a cringing, not a Church in a domineering attitude; not a Church without an adequate number of bishops, clergy, or churches;—but the WHOLE Church, with its glorious and blessed Bible, its ancient Fathers, its invaluable Prayer-book and Homilies, its wholesome discipline, its well-known and ancient principles, its wise laws, its peculiar courts, its noble hierarchy, its Christian priesthood, its connexion with the State, its national character, its inalienable rights, its Christian purity, its high standards of morals and of faith, its incomparable Articles, and its perfect freedom and

Christiananqity. “The Church—the Church!” cries “*My Life.*” “The WHOLE Church—the WHOLE Church!” is the rallying word of the *present volume*.

Not that our attachment to the Church of England blinds us as to her defects, and not that while we rejoice in the light she has shed for ages over the land of our birth, and from thence on distant regions of the world, we are ignorant that her history has been one of darkness as well as of light, of ignorance as well as of knowledge, and not unfrequently of dull, cold, and lifeless morals, without the light and warmth of Gospel doctrine and Gospel promises and hopes. We neither deny nor seek to conceal the fact, that the Church has had its periods of lamentable decline, but it has still been “the Church,” and God has watched over it in all its seasons of light and of darkness, of error and of truth, of decay and of recovery. We are not ignorant that much of imperfection at different periods of her history has been mixed up with even the most wise and well-considered laws, institutions, ordinances, discipline, and ceremonies of our Mother Church. But still she is the mother of us all. Not wholly unacquainted with the history of that mother from her earliest preserved records to the present time, we are not ignorant of the innovations which have been introduced, the heresies which have been condemned and exploded, the

changes which have been made to meet the baneful influence of Popish doctrines and superstitions, or to counteract the ill effects of a sweeping and puritanical fanaticism, and most sincerely do we feel that this Church is still “the Church in the wilderness,” but conducted by the pillar of cloud by day, and by the pillar of fire by night. It is a habit with some members of the Church of England, who, in their ignorance or conceit, set themselves up as “*exclusively*” orthodox, to protest against any objections being made by their brother members to any defects in that Church. Though stated with Christian meekness, deplored in Christian sincerity, and submitted to in Christian patience, these self-styled solely good Churchmen will have it that the Church is perfect; that no change could be made for the better; that the alteration of a word would be injurious, and of a phrase would be fatal; and yet if they knew the history of the Church, as they should do before they become controversialists, they would know that such history was one of constant emendation. It is not by an unenlightened and ignorant attachment to the Church that her bulwarks can be protected, her walls rendered more impregnable, her citadel preserved from attack, or her members from defeat and dismay. It is not by repeating with that solemnity which ignorance so often affects, “that the Church is *per-*

*fect*," that schism is prevented, sectarianism diminished, and dissent destroyed; men are not convinced by *mere assertion*, nor imposed upon by heavy and pompous declamation; and those who admit fairly and faithfully "No—we know that our Church is *not* perfect, because whatever there is of man in it must always be frail and faulty; but it is about as perfect as all institutions can be, into which man's devisings and views enter, however pure may be the designs of their authors, and however virtuous the objects they proposed," are the real friends, the true supporters, the wise and enlightened advocates of Church establishments generally, and certainly of that branch of them to which we have alike the honour and the happiness to belong.

But whilst we are convinced by reading, observation, and experience, that the Reformation was not completed; that much remained to be done; that the constitution of the Church, like the common law of the land, was, from the nature of its gradual formation, necessarily imperfect; that the doctrines of the Church have in some respects not been stated with sufficient clearness, and in other cases have been burdened by useless repetitions, and sometimes by tautological obscurity; that the discipline of the Church has been occasionally too severe, and at others too lax, according to the character of each age when

changes were introduced; that the worship of the Church admits of some amendment, and even in a few cases requires it: yet we can see in no other Church such a mass of sound doctrine, such an extent of primitive discipline, and such a spiritual harmony of worship, as in the old Catholic Church of England. This is the Church of our purest love, and it will be that of all real Churchmen, rendered more warm and efficient by being enlightened, philosophical, and profound. The defects of the Church of England have been either so magnified by her enemies, or so denied by her warm but often ill-informed friends, that truth has alike suffered from exaggeration and ignorance. On the one hand, it is a fact, that the Church of England has not met or supplied *all* the moral and spiritual wants of an increasing and vast population; and on the other hand, the *voluntary principle* has neither had the heart, the courage, or the will, to meet that deficiency. The progress of dissent and sectarianism is not to be ascribed *exclusively* either to the confiscation of Church endowments, to the want of parliamentary grants for building churches, or to the inadequate accommodation afforded by the national temples to the population of the country; nor to the conviction, erroneously said to be growing amongst men, that Church establishments are injurious to religion; or

even to the zeal of dissenters, their alleged superior piety, or their active and lively institutions.

The love of novelty, the aversion to antiquity, the repugnance to authority, the taste for change, the desire for power and importance, felt by the mass of those who frequent dissenting congregations, are some of the reasons why new systems are received with avidity, and followed by multitudes; but there is no *one* cause either for the prevalence of dissent, the birth of new schisms, or the increase of the votaries of multiform separation. It is not because the Church is faultless that she is opposed with so much vehemence, nor yet because she is enormously faulty. She is neither the one nor the other.

There is now, as there has been for a long period of time, *a great deficiency in church accommodation*. How is this? The British legislature has in its past history deprived the Church of three-fifths of her endowments. Such deprivation was neither wise, necessary, nor expedient. The act of spoliation was worldly-minded, cruel, and sacrilegious; and has never yet been atoned for by an act of national or parliamentary compensation. If the endowments of the Church of which she has been robbed still belonged to her, as her pious donors originally designed, there would have been no occasion for applications to parliament for grants for building churches,



nor would her truest sons have to mourn over the want of provision for episcopal worship.

The tithes were unjustly impropriated. Before then, they were paid to a resident and often a spiritual body, but when the monasteries were suppressed, they were delivered to court favourites to fatten and pamper the indolent and the worthless. The vicarages theretofore supplied with adequate but with by no means excessive revenues, were reduced to pittance too scanty to meet the daily wants of men, even satisfied with the commonest necessities of life.

Other property was confiscated to the will of the court and the crown, which had not even the guilt of having ever belonged to the monasteries; and Elizabeth, of "famous memory," pillaged the sees of the benefices without shame or remorse. "The suppression of the free chapels and chantries had enriched the lords and courtiers! Nothing but the title was left to the incumbent of many cures; benefices were laid out in fee farms, or given to servants for keeping hounds, hawks, and horses: the poor clergy, reduced to the sorriest pittance, were obliged to enter gentlemen's houses as clerks of the kitchen, surveyors, and receivers: those whose business it was to have reformed such a state of things connived at such iniquities; private men's parlours were hung with altar cloths, their tables

and beds covered with *cofes* instead of carpets and coverlets; and many carousing cups had been formerly the sacred chalices! The jewels and plates of the altars were sold by their fraudulent possessors, and houses and lands were purchased with their unhallowed products." The king and the parliament, who ought only to have corrected these abuses, destroyed the good itself; they who ought to have restored to parishes their endowments, to have annexed some of the richer abbeys to the new bishoprics according to promise, and to have introduced into all monasteries such regulations as would have rendered them Catholic, not Papist institutions, adopted a different line of conduct; and to gratify a love of wealth, and a desire for gold and ease, they impoverished the Church and enriched themselves. And why is it that now hundreds of thousands of British subjects are growing up without any one to sound the Gospel trumpet in their ears, and without a saving knowledge of Him, whom to know is life eternal? Why is it, as we walk through the length and breadth of this wondrous land, we are so often struck with the numbers of country churches, in comparatively thinly populated districts, whereas in large and thickly peopled parishes they are few and far between? It is that the piety of our ancestors has been frustrated by the impropriation of

tithes, by the destruction of glebe-houses and lands, by the confiscation of endowments, and by the perpetuated restrictions of the *Mortmain Act*, which made the king's consent necessary for any transfer of property to an ecclesiastical body ; and which thus sought to prevent bodies corporate from acquiring any lands or tenements since the services and other profits due from them to the superior lord were thereby taken away, because escheats, &c. could never accrue, as the body never died. How deplorable was that policy which, to impoverish the Church, deprived individuals of the right of applying their property as they might think fit, and imposed on conscientious men, who felt it to be their duty to provide after their death for the propagation of sound doctrine, either to resort to vague bequests of personal instead of real property, or to other evasions of an unwise and atheistical law. If the tithes, glebes, and endowments of the Church had not thus been spoliated, on the one hand, and if the continued and beneficial operation of individual piety and benevolence had not thus in fact been legally prevented, on the other hand, the Church lands of London would have more than provided for the spiritual wants of its half famishing population, and the vicarages of £20, £30, £40, £50, £60, to £100 per annum in the country, would not disgrace the *clergy list*, remain-

ing as permanent memorials of the avarice and covetousness of the enemies of true religion. As the sincere Churchman turns over the pages of that modern record of the Church's revenues, he grieves over the inadequate incomes of a large body of her most active and industrious clergy, the holders of small livings; and though he firmly believes with the Rev. Sydney Smith, that, "if you were to gather a parliament of curates on the hottest Sunday in the year, after all the services, sermons, burials, and baptisms of the day were over, and were to offer them such increase of salary as would be produced by the confiscation of the cathedral property, they would reject the measure," yet their very disinterestedness makes him the more deeply regret that confiscation, which has thus been alluded to, and that impropriation of tithes, which was unjust and unwise, if not sacrilegious. *The salaries of curates are too inadequate for their labours*, and bear no proportion to their education, to their gentlemanly habits, their educated minds, the tastes which they have *properly* as well as unavoidably acquired, and even with the wants of life. Those who have not observed in the large country parishes of this vast kingdom the nature and extent of the weekly duties of a curate, and the unavoidably ill-requiting salary he receives, can form but an inadequate notion of the evils inflicted

by the confiscation of three-fifths of the endowments of the Church. Take a few examples:—look at a few of the poor vicarages as specimens of the rest; and then at somewhat better incumbencies, but with large populations, where curates are necessary to assist in the discharge of the clerical duties of the incumbents. The selection is made at hazard; in no case are the individuals referred to known. They are merely specimens selected *indiscriminately* from the clergy list.

#### TWELVE POOR VICARAGES.

	<i>Diocese.</i>	<i>£.</i>	<i>Pop.</i>
Alton Pancras ... ..	Sarum ... ..	25	210
Auborne ... ..	Lincoln ... ..	24	356
Avenbury ... ..	Hereford ... ..	49	344
Great Badminton ... ..	Gloucester and Bristol	7	529
Bardney ... ..	Lincoln ... ..	60	1,098
Barmby Moor ... ..	Peculiar of York ...	50	452
Barton St. David ... ..	Bath and Wells ...	38	410
Burton Pidsea ... ..	York ... ..	42	387
Burwell ... ..	Lincoln ... ..	51	253
Bury (Sussex) ... ..	Chichester ... ..	59	547
Darsham ... ..	Norwich ... ..	62	513
Dronfield ... ..	Lichfield ... ..	24	3,794
Total of 12 vicarages, or not £41 each ...		£491	8,893

In 6 of these 12 cases the vicars have no other preferments.

TWELVE SMALL LIVINGS, WHEN COMPARED WITH  
THE POPULATION.

	<i>Diocese.</i>	<i>£.</i>	<i>Pop.</i>
Farnhurst (Sussex) ...	Chichester ...	111 ...	769
Flixton ...	Chester ...	103 ...	2,099
Pilling ...	— ...	124 ...	1,127
St. Germans ...	Exeter ...	143 ...	2,586
Greasly ...	Lincoln ...	134 ...	4,583
Gresley ...	Litchfield ...	108 ...	2,543
Grinton Muer ...	Ripon ...	98 ...	1,247
Guisborough ...	York ...	72 ...	2,210
Guisseley Rawden ...	Ripon ...	108 ...	2,057
Hales Oldbury ...	Worcester ...	156 ...	5,000
Halifax Elland ...	Ripon ...	147 ...	5,000
Heptonstall ...	— ...	120 ...	4,661
Total of small livings, or £122 each, with nearly 3,000 souls dependent on each incumbent ...		£1,424	33,882

In 9 of these 12 cases the incumbents have no other preferments.

It would be easy to extend these examples ; but those supplied are sufficient to show the inadequacy of the revenues of a considerable portion of the churches to the wants of the clergy, who are even incumbents ; and it is now only necessary to supply a like number of examples of incumbents having larger parishes to superintend, with but small revenues for themselves, and yet who, out of those revenues, are compelled to pay curates to aid them in performing the varied and constant duties which devolve upon them.

		<i>Diocese.</i>	<i>£.</i>		<i>Pop.</i>
Halstead ... ..		London ...	390	two curates	4,637
Highworth ... ..		{ Gloucester & Bristol }	468	two curates	3,127
Holme Cultram ... ..		Carlisle ...	140	one curate	3,056
Holyhead ... ..		Bangor ...	167	one curate	4,282
Howden... ..		York ...	162	one curate	4,531
Ilfracombe ... ..		Exeter ...	150	one curate	4,000
Jarrow Westoe ... ..		Durham ...	220	one curate	9,682
Kingston, Richmond		Winchester	119	one curate	7,243
Kirkby Ireleth ... ..		Peculiar ...	125	one curate	3,234
Leigh ... ..		Chester ...	263	one curate	20,083
Llangyvelach... ..		St. David's	159	{ one curate & assist. do. }	7,753
Llansamlet ... ..		ditto ...	94	one curate	3,187
			<u>£2,457</u>		<u>74,815</u>

or £205 each ; out of which sum of £2,457, fourteen curates are to be maintained, and with nearly 6,250 souls to each living. In 9 of these 12 cases the incumbents have no other preferments.

This state of things is a vast defect in the Establishment, an incalculable drawback to the usefulness and influence of the Church, and, above all, a crying national sin, which, unless repented of and remedied, must draw down upon us the same maledictions which cause us to ask, “ Where are the churches of Asia and of Greece, of Antioch and of Tyre, of Alexandria and of Hippo, Carthage and Mida, once the centre of Christendom and the joy of the Christians ?” *Two millions of money, at least, should be annually appropriated by the nation to the building and en-*

dowment of churches, as well as in providing for the spiritual pastors and teachers of those parishes which were most wantonly plundered, and to which to this hour no compensation has been made. It is not enough to obtain by "*snatches*," or by occasional fits and starts, a grant of a million for the erection of churches, but the grant must be annual and fixed, to be of real and permanent, or compensatory value. All projects for robbing the Church must be opposed. All schemes for taking away from one portion of the Church's revenue to meet the demands for other portions must be resisted. All false and injurious cries for repairing the churches, or meeting the other demands on church-rates, by a pretended probability of letting church lands higher, must be scouted. As the sacrilege which has been complained of has not only absorbed the offerings of devout men of old, but has prevented those of devout men in future; and as it is now too late to restore to the Church the property which once belonged to her, let her sons never rest satisfied until by an adequate *annual* vote some effectual provision shall be made for the suitable remuneration of all her clergy, and the large and much needed supply of religious instruction to an increasing and spreading population.

The inadequate salaries of the working clergy or parish curates is a favourite topic with the enemies



of the Church of England. Although really unaffected by a knowledge of their wants and privations, the dissenters pretend to be greatly indignant at the undoubtedly small incomes of this portion of the national clergy. They lecture, descant upon, and protest against the rich prebendal stalls, and compare them with those who are "passing rich with £40 a year." Now, although this exaggerated and unreal sympathy can call forth no responsive echo from the true sons and sincere friends of the Church, yet it is much to be lamented that the revenues of by far the greatest number of parishes in England will not allow of the incumbents giving the amount of salaries they would desire; whilst it is also in some cases to be deplored, that where the revenues of the incumbent are *fully sufficient*, the curate is not treated with corresponding generosity or justice.

This is *no* defect in the *constitution* of the Church, but in her administration. It is another of the evils which has arisen out of Church property confiscation, tithe impropriation, and the injurious operation of the *Mortmain Act*. If the incomes of the perpetual curates, and their labours, be also referred to, they form a subject for deep lamentation. What must every sincere and pious Churchman think of the following list of the salaries or incomes of twelve

perpetual curacies, of which hundreds and hundreds quite similar may be found in the clergy list?

	<i>Diocese.</i>	<i>£.</i>	<i>Pop.</i>
Norton... ..	Gloucester ...	51 ...	423
Norwich (St. Helen) ...	Norwich <sup>e</sup> ...	16 ...	521
Oswestry (Trinity) ...	St. Asaph ...	40 ...	3,000
Oxford (St. Thomas)...	Oxford ...	105 ...	3,277
Ramsholt <sup>m</sup> ... ..	Norwich ...	17 ...	215
Heckingham, ... ..	Ditto ...	31 ...	183
Hexham <sup>m</sup> ... ..	Durham ...	139 ...	6,042
Hillingdon (Uxbridge)	London ...	111 ...	3,043
Horton ... ..	Durham ...	83 ...	2,423
Hovingham... ..	York ...	101 ...	1,193
Ilford ... ..	London ...	156 ...	3,512
Leyland Hoghton ...	Chester ...	55 ...	2,198
		<hr/> £985	<hr/> 26,030

In 9 of these 12 cases the incumbents have no other preferments.

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Thus twelve perpetual curates, with salaries only averaging £75 per annum, have to take the spiritual charge of districts the average of which is not less than 2,170 souls per district. It is no answer to this state of things to reply, that in other districts, where the populations are thinly scattered and where the duties also are few, that the revenues are larger. These rich prizes in the Church are essential to all church establishments. They enable the man of learning and research to devote his time and energies, not to the duties of a preaching, but of an

historical or polemical writer. They are the cities of refuge for the weak, the afflicted, and the worn-out labourer in the cause of the christian Church, as well as the rewards of merit for distinguished and enlightened champions of Church and Christian verities.

Above all, the working clergy should be better paid. They are nearly all men of honour, gentlemen, men of first-rate education, who have often expended in their preparatory, collegiate, and other life, the capital of their small fortunes. If they had invested those capitals in business, in merchandize, or even in authorship, in farming, in shipping, in mining, and had devoted to either of those subjects their minds and energies, they would have enjoyed competency, if not wealth. Wealth they seek not, wealth they ask not, but competency ought to be assured them.

*The unequal division of labour in the Church* is an evil which may be attributed partly to the natural increase of the population, but principally to a want of attention on the part of the State to that increase, and to providing an additional supply of Church ministers, as well as of Church means and revenues. Well did John Wesley say, that he knew not, for his part, how one minister could think of undertaking the cure of souls in a parish of 2,000 inhabitants; and yet even at the present period there are very many clergymen who have to

perform the whole duty in parishes of 10,000, 15,000, and even 20,000 souls. Yes, to this very day, many, many curates have the cure of souls in parishes or districts where the population is much greater, and where dissent of course makes its most numerous and zealous partisans. How many a clergyman descends prematurely to the grave from the excess of his multitudinous and ill-requited labours ! How many sick to visit, infected atmospheres to breathe, garrets to ascend, cellars to go down to, children to christen, scholars to catechize, candidates for confirmation to examine, marriages to celebrate, graves in all seasons and during all weathers, uncovered and exposed to the scorching sun, the freezing blast, and the pelting rain, to encounter with wearied frame, anxious mind, a broken constitution, and most inadequate nourishment and support ! Yet the prayers must be read—sermons must be prepared, felt, and preached—the sacraments must be administered—the temporal affairs of the Church must not be forgotten—the churchwardens must be met, the overseers or guardians of the poor must be listened to, parochial interests must not be lost sight of, parochial charities must be watched over, the parish clerk must be made to attend to his duty, the sexton must be kept from speculation, the registers of christenings, marriages, and funerals, must all be preserved with the utmost

order ; till at last, bowed down with the infirmities of age, even in the midst of his days he retires to give place to some other victim, or even “ dies in harness.” This is no exaggerated picture—it is real life. The parochial system, both in theory and in practice, was perfect in its beginning. In *theory* it is perfect still ; but in *practice* it requires emendation. What are the labours of such a man as Mr. Angell James, of Birmingham, the dissenting teacher ? He has a salary of some £700 or £800 per annum, besides the new fees attendant on the marriages of dissenters, which now he may celebrate. And what are his duties ? He preaches twice, or at most three times on the Sunday, christens, marries, and buries about once a week, at the most, some one child, one couple, or one deceased member of his congregation. He administers the sacrament once a month—expounds once in the week—dines out more frequently with his members—and receives the visits of his friends. His life is one of perfect indolence when compared with that of a curate either in a country or a town parish ; and yet every year the former requires *rest*, and retires to some watering-place to enjoy his ease, and recruit his energies.

Yet Mr. James is one of those who attacks with most vehemence the Church of England ; whilst his friend, Mr. Binney, has written with his own hand,

“ that the Established Church is a great national evil, and that it destroys more souls than it saves.” Whilst Mr. James may preach to a congregation of 1,000 souls, his labours end there. The *members*, indeed, when sick, he *may* visit, but the rest are unknown to him ; and as he has no mission to the *whole* of the inhabitants of any district, he is entitled to remain at home. Not so the parish curate. All souls, even that, of Mr. James’s, is committed to his cure, and it is his bounden duty to seek to win them all to Christ. But who is sufficient for these things ? In crowded cities and large towns, no man. In some agricultural districts and divisions it is *possible* for a clergyman to accomplish the whole of his duties ; but amidst manufacturing populations, and in large parishes, it is *impossible*. This is the practical evil to be met and remedied ; not by isolated exertions, like those of the admirable Bishop of London in behalf of the parish of Bethnal Green ; not by voluntary subscriptions, or even splendid donations of a few warm and right-hearted noblemen or gentlemen—but it must be met, if the Church of England is not to succumb to sectarianism and dissent, by a *national* effort to wipe off the stain of past national guilt, and to provide for the future against the recurrence of similar evils. Nothing short of this will do.

The size of parishes in the nineteenth century,

and the vast amount of their population, is a fearful evil. *The Church Pastoral Aid Society* has been established to come to the relief of clergymen oppressed by the weight of their parochial duties, and has, together with its elder and sister society, effected *much good*. But are not these institutions based too much on the *voluntary* principle to be permanently and widely effectual? Ought not all that relates to a *national* religion in a country, to rely rather on the support of the country itself, than on the voluntary contributions and donations of private individuals, who may or may not on their death be succeeded in their generous gifts by the inheritors of their estates? If this voluntary principle is to be admitted, then at least let the *Mortmain Act* be repealed, and let the true sons of the Anglican Church be encouraged to imitate the examples of their pious ancestors, and bequeath to the parochial clergy a portion of their lands, to provide for the demands which will hereafter arise for further spiritual aid, by reason of the perpetually increasing amount of the population of each parish. There *was* a time when the old parishes contained on an average less than 650 souls. But what is the average now? It has been said that 2,000 is not too large a population for one clergyman to superintend, and even 3,000 has been adopted as a fair maximum.

But where is the clergyman who can discharge all the duties which he *ought* to perform to a population of even 2,000 souls? It is said, indeed, that as sectarian chapels now take up a considerable portion of the population, that a parish of 2,000 souls will not contain more than 1,500 over whom the parish clergyman will be required to preside. But this is a grave and a fatal error. All the souls within a parish are committed to the charge of the parochial clergyman, whilst only those who attend a sectarian meeting-house are under the guidance or control of their teacher. Besides which, one of the reasons why sectarianism has spread in this country is, that the parochial ministers have been often obliged to abandon to the unauthorized dissenting teachers large portions of their flock, not because they were indifferent to the spiritual welfare of those portions, but because they were physically unable to attend to all. This evil has *not* been met. In some cities, towns, and crowded districts, much indeed has been effected by parliamentary grants, by the Church aid societies, and by the piety of individuals; but these are but green spots in the vast desert of neglected and uncultivated districts. Take for example the case of BRISTOL. With a population of 104,000, what is the amount of Church accommodation? Sixteen churches, or 6,500 for each parish church! And



what is the quantum of clerical superintendence? Twenty-two clergymen, or 4,700 souls for each clergyman !!! Take the case of BIRMINGHAM, with a population of 139,000, what are the number of churches there? Thirteen! or nearly 10,700 for each parish church; and as there are 25 clergymen, each one has to watch over the spiritual interests of 5,500 souls. Take the case of MANCHESTER, with a population of 271,000, what are the number of churches there (*i. e.* the churches included in that population, for there are 15 other churches embracing an additional population of 40,000)? Only 17: or nearly 16,000 for each church; and as there are 22 clergymen performing duty in those 17 churches, each clergyman has imposed upon him a population of 12,300, whose spiritual concerns he is expected to account for and direct! What a mockery is this of that *original* parochial system, the *theory* of which is still as admirable as ever, but the *practical* working of which, owing to the want of piety in our governments and our parliaments, is a solemn and awful deception.

Nor is the inefficiency of church room for Church population confined, as is supposed by some, to such large towns and cities as those just referred to. Take the following list of twenty places, having but one parish church, and one—or at most, in any case,

two—clergymen, to perform all the duties of the parish.

			Diocese.			Pop.
Alfreton ...	...	...	Lichfield	...	...	5,961
North Allerton ...	...	...	York	...	...	5,118
Alnwick ...	...	...	Durham	...	...	6,788
Alston Moor ...	...	...	Ditto	...	...	6,858
Amlwch ...	...	...	Bangor	...	...	6,285
Andover ...	...	...	Winchester	...	...	4,843
Arnold ...	...	...	Lincoln	...	...	4,054
Ashby-de-la-Zouch,	...	...	Peterborough	...	...	4,727
Staley Bridge ...	...	...	Chester	...	...	12,000
Astbury ...	...	...	Ditto	...	...	14,673
Aylesbury ...	...	...	Lincoln	...	...	4,907
Banbury ...	...	...	Oxford	...	...	6,422
Barking (Essex)...	...	...	London	...	...	4,524
Barnstaple ...	...	...	Exeter	...	...	6,840
Basford ...	...	...	Lincoln	...	...	6,325
Bedwelty ...	...	...	Llandaff	...	...	10,637
Berwick-upon-Tweed	...	...	Durham	...	...	8,920
Bideford ...	...	...	Exeter	...	...	4,846
Bingley ...	...	...	Ripon	...	...	9,256
Bisley ...	...	...	Gloucester and Bristol	...	...	5,896

It would be easy to draw out a list of five hundred such cases, instead of twenty, but this specimen will be sufficient to show that church room is greatly wanted, and Church means of instruction are withheld as well in *quiet agricultural districts* as in large towns and cities. Who then can wonder that Dissenting and Methodist chapels should be erected in the villages and small towns of England, when the

national churches are wholly inadequate to contain a tithe of the population? Nor should the comfort of those who frequent the country churches of this kingdom be neglected. • The country churches should be warmed and ventilated, lighted for winter afternoon services, the pews should be rendered more convenient and agreeable, attention should be paid to the so placing new pews and seats in the old churches, that the congregations may see the minister who officiates. Church music should be cultivated. The churches should not only be kept wind and water-tight (and oh! how *many* are not so), but painting, white-washing, and cleanliness should be more attended to. Church clocks, bells, churchyards, fonts, and, above all, communion-tables, should not be overlooked, as is very frequently the case, in country parishes; and the people of this realm should be taught to feel, that it is no less their individual than their collective *duty* to contribute to all that is not only useful, but even wisely and prudently ornamental in their parish temples. But how can this be effected without not only adequate, but moreover a regular and systematic *annual* supply of funds for these purposes? Yet though Churchmen know and feel that these matters demand their attention, and require relief, they hesitate or neglect to press them upon parliament and upon the government,

till at last the dissenters, profiting from the false generosity and unworthy hesitation of Episcopalians, venture to demand the abolition of church-rates, and even to set up “*church-rate martyrs.*”

But the augmentation of the *number of bishops* is another necessity for the well-being of the Church, for its prosperity and increasing clergy. There was a time when the Court of the *Lord Chancellor* was sufficient for the conducting the Chancery business of the land. But at length suits so increased that a Master of the Rolls and a Vice-Chancellor were added thereto, besides the erection of a Court of Bankruptcy and various other measures of relief. In this light, and this only, should the question of the augmentation of bishops and bishoprics be regarded. To ask for more bishops, is not to attack but to confirm the excellence of the institution. When it is perceived that there is not enough church-room in the country to accommodate one-tenth portion of the population, more churches are demanded. When it is seen that the clergy of this country are wholly unable to attend to the spiritual wants of the overgrown cures, a greater number of clergy are asked for. And when it is confessed that the bishops have more to watch over and accomplish than can by possibility be done by even a Blomfield, with all his energy of character, disinterestedness, zeal, and devotedness to

the interests and well-being of the Church, a greater number of bishops and bishoprics is required. In all this there is a harmony of love for the Church, of conviction of its apostolical character, and of persuasion that it is best adapted to the spiritual wants and population of the British dominions. The line of conduct pursued by Theodore, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the seventh century, when he divided some of the larger bishoprics, which were then generally co-extensive with the kingdoms to which they belonged, and which were enormous in point of size, has invariably been approved by those who have best understood church history as well as the history of this country. Nor is the wisdom of his conduct impeached by the dispute which was raised by Wilfred, Archbishop of York, who opposed the division of *his* see. His appeal to the Pope availed him nothing with Alfred, and even after the death of that prince he was willing to accept a portion of his preferments. Yet Alfred was the prince, who, whilst he effected the division of England into counties, yet felt so much the importance of episcopal jurisdiction and power, that he associated the bishop and earl in the same court, to prevent any collision between the ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction; and in ecclesiastical causes the bishop sat as Judge, while the earl, as his coadjutor, gave effect to spiritual censures;

and in civil causes the earl presided, and the bishop, as his assistant, conferred solemnity on the infliction of the penal penalties. Yet Alfred felt that overgrown bishoprics were vast evils, and they were divided. The history of English bishoprics from the seventh to the fifteenth century is as varied as the character of the times, and of each successive age. When the higher stations in the Church conferred nothing but *spiritual* superiority attended with temporal difficulties and dangers, the appointment was safely lodged in the hands of the lower clergy, who had no inducement to elect any but the fittest governors. Bishoprics therefore were filled by the election of the clergy belonging to the see; but as the establishment of parish priests rendered the number of electors too large, they were chosen by the members of the cathedral church alone. But when the bishopric was endowed with a *temporal* state, and men might wish to become bishops without desiring a spiritual office, the king placed this newly established power in hands which might render it serviceable to his government. This led to endless disputes and difficulties, to appeals to the Pope, and to collisions and troubles. In subsequent periods the appointment became lodged in the crown, the chapter generally electing such clergy as were approved by the court, and the Pope sanctioned the

regal nomination. In 1545, when all monasteries were suppressed, more bishoprics were erected. Westminster was erected in 1540; Chester, Gloucester, Oxford, Peterborough, in 1541; Bristol in 1542; and Henry VIII. had, even then, in the then state of the population of the country, a plan for erecting an additional number of twenty. Have such erections, or such proposed augmentation, been condemned? Never. Twelve years afterwards, under the reign of one of the worst enemies to religion whose name has been preserved to us by ancient or modern history, Queen Mary, the bishoprics of York, St. David, Chester, and Bristol, were declared void, because the bishops were married men; and, Lincoln, Hereford, and Gloucester, on the plea, that the terms on which they held them, viz. the good behaviour of their possessors, were null and void, as they were offensive to royalty. Various other circumstances led to other vacancies, so that with the restoration of deprived bishops, there was, in 1554, an alteration of sixteen out of the bench. The whole proceeding was illegal, arbitrary, and tyrannical; but in all these measures, the importance of the bishops, and of a considerable number of bishoprics, to the Catholic Church in England, was acknowledged, either verbally or tacitly, both by friends and foes. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth the spoliation

of the bishoprics commenced, and the lands of vacant bishoprics were exchanged for impropriated tithes. This was a fatal blow to Church revenues—and yet then also as before the importance of a large and adequate number of bishoprics was alike admitted by friends and foes. In 1559 the vacant bishoprics were filled up. From deaths and deprivations almost all the sees were at that time unoccupied, and some difficulty occurred in placing bishops therein. Parker was appointed the metropolitan bishop, Scory was elected to that of Hereford, Barlow to that of Chichester, Coverdale was Bishop of Exeter. The other sees were most of them filled up during the next year, and the Church began to employ itself on those great points in which amendment was chiefly required. In 1559 there were fifteen bishops and 9,400 beneficed clergy. Nearly three hundred years afterwards there are but twenty-seven bishops, including the archbishops, and not more than 12,000 beneficed and unbeneficed clergy!! Such statistical facts as these would be irresistible with a Christian government and an assembly of Christian legislators. As in the reign of Elizabeth there was one Bishop of London, so in the reign of Victoria there is but one still. The diocese of London, now possessing a greater population than the kingdoms of Belgium and Holland, is governed



by *one* bishop. Let any one cast his eye over the mass of the parishes in the archdeaconries of London, Middlesex, Essex, Colchester, and St. Albans, and ask himself this question: Is it possible for any human being, though endowed with exemplary piety, learning, zeal, activity, and untiring devotedness, to accomplish even a twentieth portion of the spiritual duties of such a bishopric? and the answer will be, *impossible!* In like manner let any one examine the extent of the diocese of LINCOLN. Let him pass over with attention the archdeaconries of Lincoln, Stow, Buckingham, Huntingdon, Nottingham; and then ask himself how is it possible that Dr. Kaye, with only a revenue of £4,000 per annum, can answer to the spiritual or temporal calls of such a diocese?—or how is it possible that he can attend to a tithe of his duties? The same observations will apply to the dioceses of *Bath and Wells*, of *Ely*, *Exeter*, *Litchfield*, *Norwich*, *Peterborough*, *Salisbury*, *Winchester*, *Chester*, and *York*. Nor do the revenues of the bishoprics bear any sort of proportion to their extent. What is a revenue of £3,250 per annum for the Bishop of Chester? of £2,700 per annum for the Bishop of Exeter? of £5,500 per annum for the Bishop of Ely? of £4,500 per annum for the Bishop of Litchfield? of £4,465 per annum for the Bishop of Norwich? of £4,500 per annum for the Bishop of

Peterborough? or of £5,000 per annum for the Bishop of Salisbury? They are *quite inadequate* to the demands made upon these diocesans. Whilst many noble families, the descendants of those on whom were bestowed the Church property at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII., or at the period when the bishoprics were spoliated by Queen Elizabeth, now possess their £80,000 to £100,000 and upwards per annum, the total revenues of all the 27 bishoprics and archbishoprics do not amount to a sum more than equal to the individual incomes of *many* private noblemen; for the whole is included in £140,874. It would then be unjust and iniquitous to divide the revenues of the bishoprics on the creation of a greater number of sees, since the new bishops would then be unavailing and useless incumbrances. Look at the bishopric of Llandaff, with an income of but £1,000 per annum!—with a dean with a salary of £42—a precentor with £6—and with vicars choral with £214 and £76. Yet who will say that the diocese of Llandaff is not extensive enough fully to occupy the mind and attention of even such a man as its present excellent diocesan? In his admirable sermon, preached at Abergavenny 6th Nov. 1840, and entitled, “*Separation either a Duty or a Sin*,” he has said, “In vain, amidst the fabrics that in these districts (iron manufacturing

districts in Wales) are reared by the skill and power of man, supplying fresh means of wealth in proportion to its continued growth and accumulation, in vain do we look for buildings destined to the production of true riches. Or, if an edifice of this kind be, after a long period of expectation, tardily provided, it bears no proportion to the vast tide of population, which has in the meantime been swelling and spreading all around, and is hardly visible amidst their crowded dwellings. Does not then the question naturally arise, on a view of this preposterous state of things—why is this forgetfulness of God? Whose are all those lines of houses, those arsenals of wealth, where every sound by which our approach to the abode of man is recognized assails the ear—all save the Sabbath signal for prayer—all, save the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Prepare ye the way of the Lord?’ For whose benefit are these myriads collected, to spend their lives on this heretofore solitary ground? Are they men who believe in His Gospel? are they members of the household of faith? and can they, year after year, draw additional crowds to the spot, and yet make no provision for their spiritual instruction, for the due administration of the sacraments, and for the preaching of God’s word?”

Well may Dr. Coplestone call this state of things “preposterous.” It is so. But how much more

preposterous is the overcharged and oppressive extent and weight of diocesan districts and duties.

Let the constitution of the Church be maintained—yes; it is episcopal. Let the bishops now in their dioceses be maintained—yes. Let their revenues be in some cases augmented—yes. Let them be in no case reduced except where a division of the bishoprics would render in a very *few* cases the present amount of inadequate income then excessive—yes! Let new bishops be appointed; overgrown bishoprics divided; and the episcopal and parochial systems be thus renovated and protected. More should not be asked for. Less would be inefficient. But such objects as these will not only never be effected, but they will never even be proposed, until the middling classes of society in Great Britain shall join the upper ranks, and insist, with a voice which could not be resisted, that the old Anglican Church be respected, defended, and maintained. A great increase of the clergy, a vast augmentation of churches, and the creation of new bishoprics necessarily also imply the supply of suitable residences to parochial or district ministers. On this subject it is impossible to do better than to cite from a valuable book on the parochial system,\* the following observations.

\* The Parochial System, an Appeal to English Churchmen. By Henry William Wilberforce, M. A., of Oriel College, Oxford. Rivington. 1838.

“ But besides adequate churches, the parochial system requires the residence of the clergy. In the country districts, this can of course be secured only by providing a house as near as may be to each church ; but in even great towns it seems possible to adopt a plan at once less costly and more efficient. . . . Many advantages then might be united, if something of a collegiate establishment were provided for the clerical body, open to as many of them as chose to avail themselves of it, and leaving to all others the liberty of a separate residence. That such a plan would be highly economical is obvious ; for besides the erection of one building instead of many, the daily cost of providing for a number of persons in a common hall is known to be far less than would be incurred by them in separate establishments.” The economical, physical, moral, social, and even spiritual advantages of such ecclesiastical establishments, are admirably depicted in the volume to which reference is thus made. Whether that plan be adopted or not, the residences of the clergy must be multiplied, and a greater attention paid to the comforts of the beloved curates, the indefatigable working members of the Church. The efficacy of the Episcopal Church in England, and elsewhere, would be greatly promoted by the more active and zealous co-operation of the laity. They ought to

visit the poor. They ought to attend to the statistics of the Church. They ought to look after the schools. They ought to see why the churches are thinly attended by the working classes, when such is the case, and to adopt for children the *principle* at least of that charming system so well known on the Continent, in Catholic countries, of crowning at the church with a garland the best child of the parish during the past year. The laity should distribute Church tracts, explain to the poor why they are *Church people*, point out to them the sin and danger of *schism*, and invite them to the temples and altars of their forefathers. The laity would then indeed feel that to be a Churchman is a *real privilege*; for the privilege would be surrounded by duties, and would correspond with it. In like manner, the *deacons* of the Church should be more utilized, and become, much more frequently than they do, assistant ministers. How admirable a state of things might thus be brought about, in which all who belong to the Church would be doing all their best for the service and increase of the Church, so that none would remain unemployed. It would be the realization in the Christian church of that which we behold in nature—the rills contributing to the streams, the streams to the rivers, and the rivers falling into the vast and absorbing ocean. It would be the larger develop-

ment of that system of Bible operation, which begins with associations, goes on to auxiliary societies, and terminates in the Parent Institution. It would be the Christian application of the principles of activity and division of labour described in the Sacred Scriptures (Jeremiah, ch. vii., ver. 18), "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough to make cakes for the Queen of Heaven." The increased benevolence, or Christian generosity, or faithful friendship of those to whom property, as a talent, is entrusted, must also come to the aid of the Church of England. Men of large fortunes must be asked for *large* contributions. Men of baronial estates and influence must be taught to feel that churches, chapels, and endowments, schools, glebe-houses, or central houses, must be erected by themselves. But this will not be sufficient. Undoubtedly the nobility and gentry of this country can do much; but far more can be accomplished by compelling parliament, compelling the government, to appropriate annually some TWO OR THREE MILLIONS extra for Church and Christian purposes. But how is this to be brought about? Let the clergy convoke at their glebe-houses the respectable, wealthy, influential, and *church-going* portion of their parishioners, and when they are too numerous to meet in the parlours, let them be assembled in the

into their flocks those whom they regarded as separatists, was it not his duty to have ceased to prosecute his labours, other than by means of preaching in the churches still open to him, as well as by the plans I just mentioned ?

*Vicar.* Why the fact is, Sir, that when Mr. Wesley appointed those preachers to pray, read, and exhort, he directed that the hours of service should in no instance interfere with those of the Establishment, and the members were exhorted to communicate at the parish church. He wished to raise up a religious society *within* the National Church, not without it. He wished to introduce a greater mass of the leaven of vital piety amongst its members. For a great many years this system existed in such a state, that if the clergy had been disposed to co-operate, and if the principle of itinerancy in neglected and destitute districts where there were no churches had been permitted, the people now called Wesleyan Methodists would have remained members of the Church of England. On some occasions, indeed, and even as early as 1743, the clergy of certain districts were impressed with the good effected by his instrumentality, and desired that the religious movement commenced by his



# YOUR LIFE.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE HISTORY OF YOUR LIFE.

ON one of those hills in Worcestershire, which are so bright and sunny, not very far removed from the neighbourhood of the Malvern Wells, stands a quiet parsonage. Since that parsonage was built, many a storm has threatened to dismantle its old tiled roof, and to tear up by the roots the elms, which form at once its beauty and its shade. But, like that church to which it belongs, it has stood the blasts of more than two centuries, and is at once a pleasant winter dwelling, when the snow lies three feet thick around it, after a north-easterly drift—and a most joyous residence when the notes of the birds are heard on the return of summer's gay months. The ivy on the front and on one of the sides of the

parsonage seems as old as the dwelling it adorns; and even the feathered songsters hail it in spring as their hereditary nesting-place. Many a generation of *robins* have nestled in its protecting foliage, when the frost has driven them closer and closer to the habitations of men; and the parlour window, surrounded by the same ivy, which looks on the garden, has been opened in wintry weather for many a year by its various inmates, that the crumbs of the breakfast-table might be thrown out to these pretty red-breasted seekers of charity.

The old parsonage is built of red brick; but as two of its walls are nearly hidden with ivy, and the third and fourth by grape vines and clematis, there is not more than enough of the old-fashioned red to be seen, to render it a pleasing and antique picture. The roof is deep; the chimneys are stout and sturdy; many a thunder peal has rolled around them, as the lightning has more than once scathed their neighbouring elms; but they also have hitherto resisted the demolishing fingers of Time; and except that the architecture of the days in which the parsonage was built indicates sufficiently its ancient character, there

is a freshness about the dwelling of its venerable inmate which partakes of the greenness and bloom of youth, rather than of the decay and feebleness of age. The garden which surrounds it is the very sunniest specimen of Flora I ever remember to have witnessed, at least in the months of June, July, and August; and the lovers of roses may feast more senses than one, if, during the early part of the summer, they may be disposed to visit this ancient dwelling. The parlours, for there are two of them, are certainly somewhat antiquated. The windows are, still casements; and sliding inside shutters continue to be the only defence of its inmates from the unwelcome visits of nightly depredators. A huge beam of wood runs across the ceiling of each of these sitting-rooms, which are little more than seven-and-a-half feet high. The successive inhabitants of the vicarage have left untouched the old-fashioned chimney-pieces: the paper which *adorns* the walls has gained so many new hues and tints from the dust and sunshine, smoke and fire of former generations, that it is next to impossible to say what were its primitive colours. A few pieces of old oaken furniture have descended with the parsonage and its walls; no one ever

removing them, perhaps on account of their clumsiness, and perhaps from a feeling of respect for their antiquity: and there are portraits of two of its early vicars, worthy of better frames, and deserving the attention and respect of the lovers of the great and good men of olden times; of whom, indeed, the world was not worthy. The rest of the furniture is an odd mixture of the tasteful and the rude—a sort of heterogeneous combination of the caprices or partialities of its various past occupants; with here a pretty little japanned painted flower-stand, fresh, one would think, from Paris; and there, a huge iron hod, fit to hold coals for a blacksmith's furnace. The mahogany table in one room appears capable, by its strength, of becoming another Atlas; whilst close to the window, where the robins are fed, is a music-stand from Broadwood's. Some vicar, a hundred years ago, was partial to reading all night by the fire-place, and so there are brass branches for two candles fixed to the wall on one side of the chimney, about the height they should be to throw light on a book with comfort and cleanliness when the reader should be sitting in a low chair. The lady of some other past reverend occupier was

addicted to a love of her own features, and there are, therefore, to be seen two large and one small mirrors in one of the bed-rooms: it is called the "*glass-room*," from this very circumstance.

The doors of all the rooms are thick, black, and but badly furnished with locks, except the "*glass-room*," and that is supplied with one, no doubt regarded as a "*patent*" in those times, but which in the days in which we live does look a little awkward. The very best room in the house is undoubtedly *the study*. Light, cheerful, looking over extended and exquisite scenery, and well adorned with the library of its present venerable vicar, the collection of sixty years of reading and reflection, it is a room where the thoughtless become studious, and the studious become happy.

Attached to the parsonage is an orchard, well supplied with the old English fruits, so healthy and refreshing; a small farm-yard, two large and beautiful meadows, and the necessary out-houses, so essential to comfort and to country domestic life. A kitchen garden, a well, deep and supplied with excellent water, and a little pond for the cattle, with a land spring perpetually gurgling as it ripples down its way

into the valley beneath, are the rest of the comforts and conveniences of this most agreeable though antiquated vicarage.

The present vicar is an octogenarian; during a period of sixty years he has preached the Gospel, "*in season and out of season,*" to multitudes of his fellow-beings; has lived in crowded cities, in rural valleys, amidst enthusiastic and frantic Jumpers and Shakers, and with cold, stiff routineers, in the external forms of religious duties or habits; has had at one time to wage war with blasphemy, infidelity, and schism, and at another to stir up whole populations from their lethargy and supineness; has had to defend the Church against the attacks of dissenters; to submit to the irritable tempers and uncouth conduct of more than one lay patron; to answer to unjust charges preferred against him to his bishop; to visit thousands of sick-beds in some districts, and lunatic asylums, hospitals, and workhouses in others; to associate in some parishes with the higher classes of society, and a few months afterwards to be surrounded by the veriest dunces of ploughmen; here to carry on a controversy with the Socinian teacher, who sought to undermine the hopes of the poor and the

dying ; there to expose the fallacies of dissenting separatists, who taught the dogmas of private judgment and individual interpretation ; in one parish to enforce church discipline against a refractory dissenting churchwarden, and in another to accept a challenge made by a dissenting minister for a public discussion as to the scriptural character of the Church of England. Now, to defend the rights of the clergy against the encroachments of laymen, and then to defend the rites and ceremonies of the Church against the invasions of certain Whig clergy. At one period to refuse the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to a notorious profligate, at another not to accept ungodly sponsors for infants at their baptism, and at a third to answer for his conduct in refusing to read the Church Burial Service, over an avowed atheist. At one time of his life to take the lead against wild schemes of field-preaching in districts where churches were abundant, and at another period to encourage the zealous efforts of pious men, even though not Conformists, in their efforts to make known the truths of the Gospel to large and deserted districts. Regardless of ease, comfort, health, and even life, he performed for more than half

a century, with 'exemplary' zeal, evangelical faith, and true devotedness, all the duties of a working clergyman—that is, of a true priest and minister of Jesus Christ; and now, when the keepers of the house tremble, when the strong men bow themselves, when the grinders are ceasing because they are few, and those that look out of the windows are becoming darkened; when the doors are about being shut in the street, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he rises up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music are brought low; when he is afraid of that which is high, and fears are in his way, and the almond tree flourisheth, and the grasshopper is a burden, and desire is about to fail, the eye of his faith looks far, far beyond those green and bright meadows and that meandering stream, which fix the attention of the traveller or the visiter to this exquisite scenery, and his *soul* gazes on fields which are ever vernal, listens, by anticipation, to music which shall never cease, and seems to be entering with steps of joy the city of the heavenly Jerusalem, whilst he longs to lend his feeble voice to the chorus of angelic harmony, or to hear on David's harp the notes of Israel's harper. Ere the silver cord is



loosed or the golden bowl broken, or the pitcher broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, whilst he knows and regrets not that his dust must return to the earth as it was, he is thrice joyous in the assurance that his spirit, emancipated, purified, and free, shall return unto God who gave it; and that therefore “vanity of vanities” will no longer be stamped on his sanctified and happy nature. In that study, he holds communion with himself, with the past, and with the future. He reviews all the days of the years of his past life with sorrow that he has done so little for the Saviour who died to redeem him; but with gratitude that he has been enabled to hold on his Christian course and persevere unto the end. In the study of that old parsonage, above all, he holds communion with his God; and draws down from heaven, by his faith and prayer, the blessings which are best suited to his present state and future prospects. “My God will supply all my need” has been the motto of his long and active life; and this confidence of half a century has not been disappointed. This vicarage, with competence, not wealth, with ease, not luxury, with moderate duty, but not fatiguing occupation, is

one of the varied blessings of Church Establishments. The *voluntary system* has no such moral and Christian retirements for its bowed and aged teachers. The vicar of the Malvern Hills would by it have been turned out, when no longer active and energetic, on the moors and the mountains, unprovided for and unprotected, to meet the blasts and the rains, the heat and the cold of our variable climate, without a protection, shelter, or home. But the Church of England provides for *her* clergy, not palaces indeed, but homes; not purple and fine linen, but raiment and cleanliness; not feasting and finery, but competency and enjoyment.

A visit once made to this vicarage, or rather to its godly, humble, and respected occupant, has led to the composition and publication of this volume. As, during many long winter evenings spent with this venerable man, the conversations which took place between the writer of this memoir and himself were founded on the events and scenery of his past days, he was often asked, "Why, Sir, do you not write **YOUR LIFE**?" "My life," he as invariably replied, "might, if faithfully recorded, be useful to the church and the world, but I am too old to

write it. I have an abundance of materials, notes, diaries, correspondence; and ten years ago I could have written it, but it is too late now; and my papers alone, without personal explanations, would to third parties be nearly unintelligible." During several weeks the conversations continued. Every day new events were spoken of and strange incidents related; and the conviction that the life of the Vicar of the Malvern Hills—for so we will style him for the sake of a title—would be fraught with instruction and replete with interest, daily increased. "Then *I* will write your life," said the author of this volume, at the close of a conversation of more than ordinary interest, on the subject of what was styled ECCLESIASTICAL REFORM; "and, with your permission, Sir, it shall be called 'YOUR LIFE.'" The thought pleased him. To do good, and yet not to be known to have done it, had been with him the habit of half a century: and whilst he would never have consented to have published his autobiography with his own name, he had no objection to supply all the materials for a volume with so unpretending and modest a title. After a few days' consideration, a plan he invariably adopted when matters of importance were brought

under his consideration, the vicar consented: and it was agreed that whilst he should be engaged in arranging his papers, and preparing to give method and order to the communications with which he had promised to supply his biographer, that biographer should proceed to the metropolis, arrange for a further absence of three weeks, and return to the vicarage to fulfil *his* part of the engagement.

It was in the pretty month of April, when the author of "YOUR LIFE" returned to the parsonage. The weather was unusually warm and summerish. The vicar was "a young man again," as he turned over the leaves of his diary for 1779, and whilst he was sitting in an old garden chair, not indeed beneath the shade, but beneath the branches, at least, of his favourite elms, reading to a grand-daughter some records of his past days, his future biographer arrived at the old vicarage. "Welcome back again," said the vicar; "I am preparing the materials you require, and see, I was reading to Amelia an extract from my diary this day fifty years!" It was as follows:—

"SUNDAY, 7th MAY, 1779.

"Rose at five. Studied my Bible till six. Breakfast and family prayer over at seven. Rode on

horseback to S——, five miles off, to read prayers to about forty souls, removed, by that distance, from all religious instruction. No church nearer than my own. Arrived there at a quarter past eight; found the people all assembled in the building set apart for that purpose. Read prayers. Sung a glorious psalm of David's to the Old Hundred. Preached a short sermon on the *New Birth*, and left them all weeping or praying. Rode back fast; arrived in good time for the morning service; spent a few minutes in meditation and prayer; read the full morning service to a congregation of four hundred; preached on the great and glorious doctrine of *Sanctification*. Administered the sacrament. Dined at one. Buried a poor aged Christian at two. Read the evening service at three, to a larger congregation than in the morning. Preached on the parable of the Talents. Baptized three children. Took tea at five. Set off at half-past five to R——, a distance of four miles in another direction, over a difficult road, the horse frequently stumbling up the hills; reached R—— at half-past six precisely. Forty persons collected together to hear prayers read and a sermon. My church the nearest also to them. Read the evening service, and preached on the subject of the *Thief on the Cross*. Returned home at a quarter past nine. Family prayers, supper, conversation, and to rest."

“ This is a specimen,” said the old vicar, “ of the duties of the working clergy even in by-gone days. Of those men, Sir, who are represented as feeding on the vitals of society, as being inattentive to the spiritual wants of their flocks, as living lives of ease and of indifference. Many and many a day, Sir, have I walked twenty miles round and about an extensive parish to visit the wretched and the sick, and the poor in the workhouse, and have eaten nothing but a crust of bread for nine and ten hours at a stretch. It was God who gave me strength, as well as inclination, to perform my duties ; and now it is He who hath placed me in this goodly dwelling in the evening of my days. The Church of England, Sir, has been accused of not possessing so hard-working a clergy as the Church of Rome. This is a wicked charge made for party purposes, and with bad intentions. I have had abundant opportunities for observing the conduct of my clerical brethren, and of very few can I say, that they ever allowed their duties as parochial clergymen to remain unperformed, in order to gratify their indolence, or their love of ease. The duties of parish priests are so multiplied, incessant, and varied, that nine out of ten

thousand must be laborious. So much is imposed on them by their own consciences, so much by the Church, so much by the civil government, so much by the laws of the land, so much by the poor and needy, sick and dying, and so much by all classes of the parishioners, that whilst a dissenting minister thinks he works hard if he preaches four sermons a-week, and attends a prayer-meeting, a curate's Sunday's work alone, in a large parish, is equal to the whole of the labour of the dissenting teacher during the whole of the seven days. It is time, Sir, that the people of this country should be made better acquainted with the toils, hardships, trials, difficulties, opposition, persecution, and even *poverty* of the clergy of the *National Church*. It is time that the misrepresentations of dissenters and sectarians should be exposed and refuted. It is time that the people of this country should be made to feel what they owe to the Church, and what is their debt to the clergy. It is time that calumny should be refuted, not by counter-calumny, but by facts and arguments. It is time that the senseless cry of '*Reform the Church*' should be put down by the counter-cry of '*Reform yourselves!*' It is time that

‘ A RALLY FOR THE CHURCH ’ should be made, as in days of yore, and that the clergy should cry aloud, ‘ To your tents, O Israel ! ’ ”

As he said this, the face of the Christian veteran was lighted up with religious ardour and fire, and his eyes once more glittered with wonted energy.

“ *You are right, Sir, you are right,*” replied the biographer of the vicar, “ and, with God’s help and grace, we will seek to realize some of this good by the publication of ‘ YOUR LIFE ! ’ ”

“ Then I shall have twice lived,” said the venerable man, “ and it may be, that my *written* life shall at some future period *assist* in bringing about a reaction for the Church of England. “ I assure you, Sir (added the vicar with unusual emphasis and energy), I believe in my conscience that, but for the Church of England, her liturgy, her litany, her collects, her homilies, her sacraments, and her sermons, this country would have become as deistical, or as infidel, as revolutionary France. When towards the close of the last century the goddess of Reason was deified at Paris, and the writings of Paine were disseminated in our farm-houses, as well as in the manufactories and workshops of our large towns ; when anarchy and treason



stalked about at noon-day ; 'when the corresponding societies, Godwin, Horne Tooke, Thelwall, Frost, and other demagogues, preached war to the hilt, against '*the altar and the hearth, against the palace and the cottage,*' if the Church of England had not then existed, society would have been dissolved, property would have been partitioned, and a sanguinary republic would have been proclaimed. Where were the dissenters in those days ?— Trembling in their conventicles, or secretly aiding the revolutionists. 'The social, quiet, unostentatious, but permanent and conservative influence of the clergy in those times, preserved Great Britain from anarchy, crime, and destruction. Not to them, but to God, be the praise.'

The next day, the largest table in the study was covered with papers, the vicar took his seat in his favourite arm-chair, the writer of these pages became his future biographer ; and those who may read them are thus supplied with the now-published history of "YOUR LIFE."

## CHAPTER II.

THE EARLIER DAYS OF THE VICAR OF THE MALVERN HILLS  
 —THE HERBERT FAMILY—PICTURE OF AN EPISCOPALIAN  
 OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—A METHODIST GOVER-  
 NNESS—EVENTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—ANNE  
 LEESE AND THE SHAKERS—A SCENE.

THE vicar of the Malvern Hills was born at Epworth, in Lincolnshire, the 5th June, 1750. It was in the same year that two shocks of an earthquake at London had so alarmed the inhabitants of the metropolis, that tens of thousands hastened on foot and by every species of conveyance to the more distant counties, influenced also as they were by the absurd predictions of an enthusiastic soldier, who affected to foretel that in a short period another shock would be felt, which would lay all London and Westminster in ruins. The father of our vicar, who was a Churchman of the old school, ascribed these visitations of Heaven to the growth of new doctrines and the progress of Methodism. He was a private gentleman, a member of a respectable but by no means opulent family,

and belonged to those then rigid Churchmen who had viewed with anxiety the progress of that religious movement in the Church which ought never to have gone beyond it, commencing in 1729, and going onwards to the period in which we now live. Although the father of John Wesley had preached with fidelity and zeal during a considerable number of years to the inhabitants of Epworth, and had felt most anxious that his son should succeed him, the old rector did not live long enough to witness that religious movement from *without* the Church, which he had anticipated and desired should only take place *amongst the members* of its communion. He had expected that the clergy who joined his son in this movement would have remained faithful to him, that others would have been added to their ranks, and that the rapid decay of religious light and influence which had taken place from the restoration of the Stuarts to the middle of the eighteenth century, would be arrested by means of a united and powerful effort of the zealous and active clergy in the Establishment. As the Presbyterians of the former epoch had gradually degenerated towards Arianism and Socinianism, and as Antinomianism had taken the place

of the doctrines of Calvin in the Independent and Baptist meeting-houses, the Church of England, at the period of which we are now speaking, had no really formidable enemy to cope with, but was in a situation to have carried out, without any interference from other sects, that religious movement which commenced in 1729, in the University of Oxford. Instead of opening the churches of the metropolis to these preachers of the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, most of those edifices were closed against them, and though not formally, they were virtually ejected from their pulpits. Thus Methodism, which in its earlier years, and indeed during the greater period of the life of its founders, was nothing more than a religious movement in the Church, itself of a zealous but still orthodox character, was, through the mistaken views and conduct of the clergy of that period, driven out of the Church into the world, and almost compelled to erect itself into a distinct body, notwithstanding the repeated decisions of the heads of that movement, that they would not separate either themselves or their system from the national religion. The father of the vicar of the Malvern Hills was named Herbert. At

Epworth he had some influence. He was virtuous in his habits, quiet in his life, possessed rather more than competency, devoted a portion of his time to the relief of the physical wants and sufferings of his poorer parishioners, was regular in his attendance at church, had gone through all parish offices with exemplary assiduity and honour, and had always set himself against new and strange doctrines, whether political or religious. Although he had by no means opposed the zeal and energy of the Rev. Samuel Wesley during the latter years of his residence at Epworth, he was not pleased with his son John, who, during more than eighteen months, officiated as his father's curate; and Mr. Herbert was delighted when, in 1729, the future founder of Methodism was required by the rector of his college, to reside at Oxford. In those earlier days of John Wesley's life he gave evidence at Epworth of a zeal which was unpalatable to the regular Churchmen of those times, and Mr. Herbert was one of the heads of the party who opposed him. When, thirteen years afterwards, this same John Wesley returned to that long, straggling town, and preached on the tomb of his father to its inhabitants, because the use of the

church was refused him by the then incumbent, as well as the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Mr. Herbert asked triumphantly, "If all his worst apprehensions had not been realized, and if John had not turned out much worse than even *he* had predicted." The enlightened and pious Episcopalians, who were attached to episcopacy not because the parish churches were its property, but because they believed it to be the best and most apostolic form of Church government, viewed the efforts of the Wesleys with a different eye. They were few indeed in number, particularly at Epworth, but there were some; and they were principally anxious that the zeal of the clergymen, who began to attract very general attention, should be confined to the Established Church, and that nothing of dissenterism or schism should be mixed up with what appeared to them a beneficial movement. Mr. Herbert saw nothing beneficial in it. He learned with sorrow that four years after the death of Samuel Wesley, the former rector of Epworth, his son John had commenced preaching in the open air at Moorfields, and that the next year he had opened what appeared to him to be nothing better than "a conventicle." This field-preach-

ing and this teaching in the FOUNDRY, were calculated indeed to strengthen the views and opinions entertained and published by the Episcopalians of those times, and had not the Wesleys uniformly refused to administer the sacraments at that place of worship, as well as to receive invariably the Holy Communion at the Church of England, and to exhort all their followers to the same course, there would have been abundant reasons for apprehending that the object of this new movement was rather of a personal and sectarian, than of a spiritual character. Mr. Herbert was one of those, however, who disbelieved the assurances of the Wesleys, pointed to their acts of field-preaching and connection with the Moravians, and uniformly asked, "Whether such conduct was not opposed to the order, discipline, and harmony of the established religion of the realm?" Mr. Herbert was fifty years of age when his son James, the subject of these memoirs, was born. His full-length portrait represents him as a tall, spare man, with long face, but little colour, an unusually large nose, grey eyes, dressed in an ample wig, with an open flowing pepper-and-salt coat, black satin knee breeches, embroidered waistcoat, long,

and adorned with two fringed pockets, white silk stockings, high shoes, and knee-buckles of silver, studded with brilliants. In one hand he holds a gold-headed cane of such fearful size as to excite some apprehensions for the heads and backs of his children or servants, and in the other a portrait of Sacheverel, with the words, "The Church for ever," around it. His wife was a comely gentlewoman from Hertfordshire, who brought a small but acceptable dowry to the Lincoln squire, together with a goodly portion of housewifery talent, family pride, and hospitable feeling. She had nothing of dissent or Methodism in *her* veins, and felt a sort of instinctive horror of all innovations; and as she could carry back *her* genealogy to the time of William the Conqueror, greatly preferred, simply hereditary competency to even a large fortune acquired in trade or commerce, "or by any other such vulgar means." Though unskilled in either the languages or the sciences, she was a pattern for English country gentlewomen of the eighteenth century, kept her husband's and children's wardrobes in the most perfect order, superintended the domestic arrangements of the dairy and the larder, had a profound knowledge of the then rising art of



making British wines, maintained her personal toilette with taste and elegance at a very moderate expense, and preserved the utmost exactitude in all the hours and arrangements of her well-ordered household. As her dowry was rather small, Mr. Herbert soon found that it was not quite large enough; for seven children graced his board at the end of ten years' marriage, of whom the last and favourite son was the subject of these memoirs. If the family picture, obviously painted with much care, may be confided in, the daughters, four in number, were rather inclined to be handsome, and the boys were by no means ill-looking scions of the House of Herbert. To maintain the position in society to which both Mr. and Mrs. Herbert had ever been accustomed, it was necessary on their parts, as their family increased, to make some prudential arrangements, one of the most important of which was, to have the children educated at home. Mrs. Herbert also greatly preferred this plan, as Jacobinism and Methodism were the two "*isms*" she most dreaded should infect her children, and she was resolved to use her best endeavours to preserve them from such contamination. The lady to whom was confided

this task, was Miss Grace Lovegrove: “a woman of fine parts, and of great wit,” as her patroness was pleased to style her, but above all, an enemy to every innovation, as well in education as in politics and religion. Miss Grace Lovegrove undertook to instruct her pupils in all that was necessary for the children of a country squire of moderate, though respectable means, but required the most perfect submission on the part of her pupils, and the most cordial co-operation on the part of the parents. English grammar, composition, writing, history, and the use of the globes, with occasional lectures for an hour on fine star-light nights upon the planets, moon, and fixed stars, were the subjects which nearly engrossed their attention, except that varied needle-works were allowed to be objects of recreation to the girls, and arithmetic to the boys. Miss Grace Lovegrove desired to possess rather the respect than the love of her pupils, and to inspire them with awe, rather than with affection. Inattention to *her* directions was regarded by her as one of the most heinous of offences, and any disposition to doubt her perfectibility, *as an instructress*, on the part of her pupils, was punished with the

utmost and prolonged severity. Faithful to their engagements with this model of governesses, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert invariably refused to listen to any appeal made to them against the final decision of Miss Grace, who at last possessed an influence in the establishment which excited the wrath and ill-blood of the female servants. Having in vain sought to excite disobedience and then dislike on the part of the children towards their superintendent, the female domestics resolved on watching with attention all the steps of Miss Grace, and on seeking to ruin her in the estimation of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert. One of them observed, "that it was not a little strange that Miss Grace should always take a walk on Thursday, leaving at an early hour in the morning in the same direction, should always be absent longer than on any other day, and should always return rather in a dejected or pensive mood." The cook declared, "she had seen her often in company with the wife of the mercer, who had taken to Methodism." The lady's-maid had other suspicions, and, having a lover herself, "could not help thinking that Miss Grace, notwithstanding her prim manners and primitive air, might also be addicted to love-

making ;” whilst the housemaid thought “that the governess might be secretly giving lessons in the town to some family or other, without the permission of her, as well as their, master and mistress.” There were many reasons for believing in the accuracy of *all* these surmises, especially as the walks were taken as well in wet as in fine weather ; in fact, in all seasons during the then last three months ; and were apparently unknown to Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, as Miss Grace was invariably at her accustomed place at the breakfast-table. Resolved, if possible, on getting rid of the by no means agreeable “*surveillance*” of Miss Grace, and of her influence over the heads of the family, they finally resolved on employing some one to watch her movements every Thursday, and on reporting her proceedings to Mrs. Herbert, when something yet more positive, though not more suspicious, could be urged against her. A son of a neighbouring but respectable farmer, who had long since conceived a dislike for Miss Grace, because she had refused to allow him to speak to the pupils entrusted to her care, was selected as the spy : and two groats were promised him by the conspirators, if he should be able to convict Miss Grace,

either of giving lessons, love-making, or Methodism. The next Thursday morning the governess, as usual, left the house at seven, and returned a few minutes past eight. She had gone out of the great gates, passed rapidly along a lane conducting to the centre of the town, entered the mercer's shop, remained in the mercer's house nearly forty minutes, looked at her watch as she descended the shop steps, returned by the same lane, re-entered the same gates, and was, as usual, rather silent, reflecting, and dull. This was not positive, but it was circumstantial evidence in favour of the charge of being addicted to Methodism, especially as two other persons were observed by the farmer's lad to enter the mercer's shop soon after Miss Grace, and not to leave it until about half-an-hour or five-and-thirty minutes after they had entered. Who those two persons were, the lad could not say, but he *thought* one looked very much like the cook of a neighbouring clergyman, who came in to market twice a-week at an early hour; and the other not unlike the sister of the clergyman who was then officiating as curate at Epworth. Still, in spite of all these surmises, he would not speak positively, and it was determined by the

housemaid and her coadjutors that all these manœuvres should be kept a secret, and that on the following Thursday morning she should proceed “*in propria personâ*” to the selfsame shop, a few minutes before Miss Grace should leave for her accustomed walk. She was to proceed there under the pretext of wishing to purchase a variety of little articles of mercery, and was to ascertain what were really the movements of the detested governess. On the next Thursday morning, at an earlier hour than usual, the housemaid had terminated her duties, the cook was most assiduous in aiding her, and as the church clock struck *seven*, Fanny entered the mercer’s shop. “I shall have her now, at any rate,” said Fanny to herself, as she congratulated the mercer on the fineness of the weather, and who, on his part, expressed his surprise at the earliness of her visit, but of course had no suspicions as to her real motives. Fanny wished to look at threads, which were shown and selected; at darning worsted, which was produced and supplied; at tapes, needles, and pins, which were turned over and over again, and at last purchased; but no Miss Grace Lovegrove made her appearance. Fanny talked, laughed, asked for her bill, paid it,

chatted on, looked at some stockings which she did not require, just to gain time, examined one Buckingham lace with which the mercer sought to tempt her, but rejected the temptation. And still Miss Grace Lovegrove was not to be seen. But where was the wife of the mercer? She did not make *her* appearance. Fanny inquired after her health. The mercer replied that she was quite well. Fanny "*feared* that she might not be, as she had not had the pleasure of seeing her." The mercer simply said that "*she had stepped out for a little while but would return to breakfast.*" At last the clock struck eight, and Fanny "declared the hour had gone most rapidly, but that she must run home to be in time for breakfast." She left the shop *minus* two shillings and ninepence, but with an abundance of small-ware for her money. Her annoyance may be easily understood, for when she returned home Miss Grace Lovegrove had just entered before her, and the cook and housemaid were waiting with breathless anxiety to hear a faithful narrative of all her proceedings. They were soon told. What could it all mean? Disconcerted, but not defeated, they resolved, however, to persevere, and as the butcher's shop at which

the family dealt was immediately opposite the mercer's, it was decided that on the next Thursday morning *the cook* should take *her* turn, proceed at seven to purchase the provisions of the day, instead of after breakfast, and watch the movements of Miss Lovegrove. At five minutes past seven, the cook perceived Miss Grace pass with rapidity by the window of the butcher, without looking to the right or to the left, but she had scarcely gained the door, which she was obliged to do with some caution, lest, on the one hand, the governess should chance to turn round, and, lest, on the other, the tradesman in whose shop she was, should observe any thing extraordinary in her movements, when Miss Grace disappeared from her view, turning in a direction where she could no longer be watched. As soon as the shop could be left with prudence and decency, she hastened in the direction of Miss Grace's footsteps, but she was not to be seen; all her searches and researches were infructuous, and the cook returned to her waiting friends with as unprofitable and useless communications as those of Fanny. The turn of the *lady's-maid* was next to come, and she could not leave her mistress at so early an hour without permis-



sion ; it was, therefore, decided that she should ask her mistress to allow her to have that day for her monthly holiday, and to grant her permission to leave at an early hour, on condition of her returning soon in the evening. Smart and gay, the lady's-maid was ready at a quarter before seven on the next Thursday, waited about the door out of which Miss Grace Lovegrove was in the habit of proceeding, and when she made her appearance, continued to engage the governess in conversation and to walk with, or behind her, to the centre of the town. On reaching the door of the mercer's, Miss Grace made a halt, wished her unmasked companion a good morning, and a pleasant day, and then entering the shop, shut the door, and disappeared. Undefeated by the civilities of Miss Grace, the lady's-maid retraced her steps, entered the shop of the mercer, and, under pretext of wishing to purchase a silver thimble as a present for a niece, she asked for the governess of Mrs. Herbert. The mercer was evidently confused, stated that she was engaged up-stairs with his wife, and sought to serve the unwelcome visitor as rapidly as possible, and to get rid of her. The thimbles were, however, too large, or too small, took a long while to

look at, and still longer to buy, and when that purchase was completed, something else was required for the lady's-maid's mother; and at length singing was heard to proceed from a very few voices, in evidently the uppermost chamber. The mercer talked louder than he was wont to do to engage the attention of his purchaser, but the girl grew taciturn and then silent; and at last stated that "she would wait till the governess should come down, as it was nearly a quarter to eight, and by a little after that hour she would be at breakfast." The mercer again sought to get rid of his shop-guest, but in vain, and at eight, precisely, the detected governess descended, accompanied by three other females, without counting the mercer's wife and her daughter. "What do you want here?" asked Miss Lovegrove, with even more of sternness than usual. "I came to purchase a thimble, and a pair of scissors, some thread and some needles," replied the delighted spy, "but I did not think I should be so fortunate as to hear you sing Methodist hymns at half-past seven in the morning, Miss Lovegrove; I dare say my mistress would like you to teach my young mistresses how to sing them too." "Good morning, Miss Grace, good morn-

ing; I waited to compliment you on your singing."

The embarrassment of Miss Lovegrove was evident to all. The mercer advised her no longer to conceal from Mr. and Mrs. Herbert the fact of her having attended "*Methodist band meetings*" in Epworth, at his and other persons' houses, and thus prevent the possibility of such painful intelligence from reaching the ears of her employers through other channels. She promised to consider the line of conduct she should adopt, and returned home pensive as usual. It was not till the evening that the lady's-maid returned from the holiday excursion, when she communicated to her fellow-servants all that had transpired. It was resolved that when her mistress should inquire of her the next morning at her *toilette* in what way she spent her holiday, she should begin with the beginning and proceed to the end of her amusements. As was anticipated, Mrs. Herbert asked her favourite maid what pleasures she had enjoyed? and, bent upon mischief, she replied, "Why, Madam, if I may be so bold, the greatest amusement I had all day was to hear Miss Grace sing." "Miss Grace sing?" inquired Mrs. Herbert,

with unusual energy. "Why where? She did not leave the house, or indeed my side, all day; you are mad, girl, or dreaming." "Neither the one nor the other, Ma'am, I assure you; I heard Miss Grace herself sing Methodist hymns at half-past seven, at the mercer's." "Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Mrs. Herbert outright. "Miss Lovegrove of all people in the world to be singing—and singing hymns—and Methodist hymns—at the mercer's shop, and at half-past seven in the morning!! Why, poor girl, you have taken leave of your senses, or your senses of you. What do you mean? Some joke, I suppose, about some one who resembles Miss Grace, and whom you have named after her? But pray do not let Mr. Herbert hear of such sort of merriment, for he might take up the affair more seriously than I do, and be not a little angry!" "I should be sorry to make either you or my master angry," replied the lady's-maid, "but as true as Miss Grace Lovegrove is the governess of my young masters and mistresses, so true it is that I heard her sing Methodist hymns at the mercer's in this town, not in the shop certainly, but up-stairs—yes, at Mr. Roberts's, yesterday morning; and I told her that I heard

her in the presence of the curate's sister, of the cook of Captain Simpson, of Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, and of their daughter, as well as of another lady, whom one of them, I forget which, called *Leader*." Mrs. Herbert could not believe either her own ears, her own eyes, or her own maid; but, of course, required an exact relation of all that had passed, which was somewhat embellished by the malice and cleverness of the relator.

What was to be done? How could she break out the annoying intelligence to Mr. Herbert? What would be the course he would adopt? What could be her object in attending such meetings as these? Had she become a Methodist, and concealed the fact; or was she a sort of catechumen? Had she been initiated into the secrets of Methodism, or was she merely a probationer, or one curious to learn the opinions of the rising sect? Had she been inculcating sound principles to her children? Was she a dissenter, a schismatic, an enemy of the Church, and an innovator? Such questions as these all presented themselves to her mind, and she became so nervous and agitated that she declined breakfasting below, and sent word soon afterwards that she wished to con-

verse with Mr. Herbert. Wholly unprepared for such a communication, disappointment, chagrin, apprehension, anger, were all felt in alternate rapidity ; but it was decided that some further evidence than that of the lady's-maid, in a shop below, was required, as to what Miss Grace Lovegrove might be doing in an upper chamber. Whilst deciding on the best plan to be adopted, in order to satisfy their own minds and to obtain the most unequivocal evidence against so moral and religious a person as their children's governess, the housemaid entered the room with a letter from Miss Grace herself, addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Herbert. It was as follows :—

•  
“ Respected Friends, •

• “ Although I shall ever feel that I owe to no one any account of my *religious* sentiments and convictions, and although, so long as I continue to conduct the education of your children in strict accordance with the Articles and doctrines of the Church of England, of which I am, and ever shall be, an humble but sincere and devoted member, you have no right to require from me any confession of faith other than that which I publicly and sincerely make when I kneel at the altar of our beloved Church ; yet, as my views on several important points have undergone

some change since I first came to reside with you, and as those modifications must soon become known to you through other than friendly channels, I feel compelled, though reluctantly, to communicate with you on this subject. I am one of those who think that more good may be done by continuing to discharge my duty in the sphere in which I am placed by Providence, seeking on proper occasions and in a suitable manner to enlarge the circle of my operations and usefulness, than by abandoning that sphere because new and improved views of truth may have been acquired by my mind. I am as averse to changes, both political and religious, in our constitution of Church and State, as when I first entered your family; but I feel much more strongly than I did then, that it is desirable that more of active and experimental religion should find its way into all our Church institutions, and that the religious movement now commencing in this land should be conducted *by the Church itself*. I know that this is becoming the conviction of many sincerely zealous clergymen, and, whilst they deprecate, as I do, the formation of a sect without the pale of the Church, they feel that the great doctrine of our Articles—justification by faith, and by faith alone—has not been made sufficiently prominent; and that, in too many instances, the clergy have, therefore, become lax or cold, indifferent or worldly-minded.

“ Soon after my residence in your house, you are

aware that I made the acquaintance of Miss Simpson, the sister of our present curate, and that I had something to do with counselling him to come here. Miss Simpson entertains the same views of religious matters, and of the present state of Church affairs as myself, and we have very frequently conversed thereon. Some five or six other persons in this town, undoubtedly of great diversity as to rank and education, think with us, and what the Methodists, headed by John Wesley, call class meetings, have been established. Of these I am a member. We assemble once a-week, from seven to eight every Thursday morning, and confer on our own religious state, or on the conversations we may have had with others, and concert together as to the best means of seconding our worthy curate, in his desires, on the one hand, to excite a greater attention, on the part of the inhabitants of this town and neighbourhood, to religious matters, and, on the other, to prevent, if it be possible, the formation of any sect out of the pale of the Establishment in Epworth and its environs. One of the persons who attend is a female servant; I believe her to be a sincerely Christian person. Her education has been superior to her *present* rank in life (and to which she has descended through a series of misfortunes); but she is decidedly more zealous than the rest of us in all that is vital and most important in practical religion. We have no dissenters amongst



us. All, like myself, communicate in the Established Church, and I sincerely believe that none have either secular or sectarian views in the course they have adopted.

“ Aware of the objections entertained by you, my respected friends, to any thing like innovation, and apprehensive that you might as yet be unprepared to appreciate or approve even this modified form of what is miscalled Methodism, but which, if not now looked to and cultivated by the Church, may become even an opponent, I had not intended, for some months to come, to make known my proceedings to you. A circumstance of a secondary nature has, however, led to a knowledge of it by the servants of your house, and I have preferred, therefore, that it should be made known to you by myself, instead of through them.

“ Having thus communicated to you the whole of the circumstances of this case, I leave my fate in your hands. I am willing to remain in your family on the same footing as before, continuing to frequent the Thursday morning meetings, and making no other alteration in my usual habits and instruction, or I am prepared to adopt the other alternative, and retire, should you not be disposed to accord me the *same degree of confidence*, as that which you have till now reposed in me. On the one hand, I am as zealously as ever opposed to political and religious inroads on Church and State, on the part of both

Papists and dissenters; but, on the other hand, I am fully satisfied that the true friends of the Church will not seek to estrange from it those, who may desire to introduce into it more of the leaven of a vital and practical faith. I will yield to none in my orthodoxy, or in my episcopacy, but we must have something more than these to save us, and that one thing is the greatest good I can wish either to you or your children.

“Believe me to be,

“ Respected friends,

“ Your faithful and obliged friend and servant,

“ GRACE LOVEGROVE.

“ *Epworth, May 2nd, 1756.*”

“ The alternative is soon taken,” said Mr. Herbert, as he folded up the letter. “ This is nothing more or less than Methodism; and, although the letter is a very honest and a very able one, poor Miss Lovegrove is infected.” Mrs. Herbert fully concurred in the view taken by her husband. “ It is our business,” she said, “ to avoid the very appearance of evil, especially with our young folks, and therefore Miss Lovegrove must leave us.”

This determination was immediately communicated to Miss Grace, in a very kind but

decided letter by Mrs. Herbert, in which the letter expressed her perfect satisfaction with the conduct she had uniformly displayed towards her pupils, but, at the same time, her fears "that the new course on which she had entered would eventually lead her, as it had done so many others in different parts of the country, from the Church Establishment."

The whole of this transaction has been detailed at some length, because it sensibly affected the future education of the subject of "YOUR LIFE;" because Mr. Herbert and his lady faithfully represented, in their views and conduct, by far the largest portion of the thinking and respectable people living at that period of the history of the Church of England; and, finally, because Miss Grace Lovegrove and her new friends were precise samples of the zealous and vigilant, pious and sincere, but unwise and inconsiderate persons, who at that time, in various parts of Great Britain, sought to direct or lead the religious movement which had been then going on, with more or less success, for a period of from fifteen to twenty years.

It will be well, then, to look at the character and antecedents of Mr. Herbert.

Mr. Herbert had lived in agitated and anxious times. As a lad, he had heard the cry of "Down with the Whigs ; High Church, Sacheverel, and Ormond for ever ;" he had heard clergymen of the Whig school refuse to pray for the King in the usual form, and raise doubts in the minds of their congregations as to the truth of the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity ; he had seen the Pretender encouraged by Papists and non-jurors, and had witnessed the disloyal conduct of *some* dissenters. He had seen the impeachment of the Duke of Ormond, and of the Earl of Strafford ; the passing of the riot act ; the suspension of the habeas corpus ; the rebellion in Scotland, headed by the Earl of Mar, and that of England, led on by General Forster. He had seen the standard of the Pretender successfully planted north of the Tweed, and James VIII. at the head of an army of six thousand men. He had witnessed the beheading of Lords Derwentwater and Kenmore, the former a Papist, but the latter a professed member of the Church of England ; and he had a horror of all changes, and of all new societies. He remembered the mughouse clubs, the wearing of white roses, and the attempt on the life of one of the guards of the Prince of

Wales, and would love to dwell upon the agitation of the public mind at that epoch, and on what appeared to him to be the history of the events *preparatory to Methodism*. He thought he could trace the *principle* of the Methodism of 1729 to the sermon of Dr. Benjamin Hoadley, the Bishop of Bangor, before the King in 1717; and would never consent to regard the Wesleys, or Whitefield, as other than political and subversive religionists. He looked on them in the same light as on James Shepperd, the coachmaker's apprentice, who attempted to assassinate George I., or on the Rector of Porthbury, who had been twice pilloried for affirming that King George was an usurper. Averse to the Pretender, attached to the House of Hanover, and having a horror of all changes, from having seen so many, he never could and never would believe but that the Wesleys and Whitefield secretly desired to overthrow both Church and State. As to John Wesley, Mr. Herbert would very frequently declare that he was a second Cardinal Alberoni, and that if *his* principles were allowed to gain ground, the threatened Spanish invasion of England in 1719 would have been no calamity. "The scheme," as he would call

it, "of effecting a total alteration in the views and conduct of the clergy of the Church of England, by means of the introduction of Methodism into that Church," was to him no less a bubble than the South Sea scheme which he had witnessed; and Mr. John Law and Mr. John Wesley were looked upon by him as two immense jobbers on the credulity of mankind. As the "Green Book" of the South Sea Company contained the secrets and plans of that establishment to ruin the nation financially, so the "Minutes of the Conference" were, in Mr. Herbert's opinion, the Green Book of the enemies of the Church of England.

Mr. Herbert had a well-founded horror of conspiracies. He would detail with precision the minutiae of the conspiracy in favour of the Pretender, of which the Bishop of Rochester, the Earl of Orrery, Lords North and Grey, and the Duke of Norfolk were the heads, and he would insist on a connection between all these plots and the rise of Methodism. The persecution of the Protestants in France in 1723 was another of the events which was deeply impressed on the mind of Mr. Herbert. It was a favourite theory of his, that Methodism and Popery would pull hand in hand against

genuine Protestantism, and that if once "the new lights" should be followed by the English people, the clergy would be exposed to the same indignities and deaths as in the neighbouring kingdom. *Jonathan Wild* had undoubtedly attracted much attention, and excited great horror by his infamous and multiplied thefts; but John Henley, who had procured a license from the quarter sessions to set up a conventicle or oratory, and had thrown off his clerical gown, was looked upon by Mr. Herbert as a more criminal, because more dangerous, man. Though Mr. Herbert had lived in the times of Atterbury, Clarke, Whiston, Locke, Halley, Addison, Prior, Pope, and Gay, he had no decided literary taste, and was contented, like the majority of men, with the morals and religion of the *Spectator*, *Tatler*, and *Guardian*. The sermons of Bentley at *Boyle's* lectures were too criticising for him, and he "had no notion of novelties in religion, either in language, style, or doctrine." George I. had been rather too much disposed to toleration to please Mr. Herbert, and when George II. ascended the throne, he had hoped for a declaration in council more opposed to the innovations of the epoch. Even the Duke

of York and Albany, whose protection to the Protestant interests in Germany secured him the love of all the true friends of the Established Church, scarcely went, far enough for him, because his Majesty was tolerant to Lutherans, and Calvinists, as well as to Episcopalians. When Mr. Herbert was out of humour, he would compare the secret and other collections made by the Methodists for the encouragement of chapel building, to the plans pursued in 1730 by the lower classes in England for the extortion of money by *incendiary letters*, and declared “that all who promoted such schemes were enemies of the Church.” On other occasions, he regretted that he had seen repealed, in 1736, the old statutes of England and Scotland against conjuration, witchcraft, and dealing with evil spirits; and vowed that it would have been no difficult matter to apply them to the mooters of the new schism. The frequent wars which had taken place during the first fifty years of the life of Mr. Herbert had much occupied his attention. Men’s minds were distracted by national warfare; and moral and religious thoughts and plans were adjourned to *more convenient seasons*. True, the *Foundling Hospital* had been established, but not without



opposition, for Mr. Herbert's party viewed this measure as an encroachment on ancient usages. The rebellion of 1745, whilst it had justly increased his aversion to Popery and to Popish doctrines, had tended to confirm him in his prejudices against all changes and all innovations, however prudent their character, and wise and beneficial their objects. He used to say "that he had fifty years of facts to get over, before he could possibly view with even an impartial eye any proposals for reformation." And when riots broke out at Oxford, four years after the rebellion, and certain young men were arrested for drinking the Pretender's health, Mr. Herbert accused them of being Methodists *in principle*, and declared "that for his part he blamed much more those who were allowing the introduction of Methodism into *Ireland*, than he did the Oxford students for their factious disloyalty."

In the year in which the vicar of the Malvern Hills was born, the public mind was greatly agitated by the non-insertion in the treaty of peace between Great Britain and Spain of any positive stipulation against searching *British* ships in the American seas. The people were clamorous against this omission,

and cried "*No search, no search.*" "I heartily second this cry," wrote Mr. Herbert to a friend, "and will be the *loudest* to second it; but there is a search which we all should cry for; there is a search we should all demand; and that is to *search* out the Methodists, and put them down by act of parliament." The opposition of Mr. Herbert was not, however, that of an unkind, uncharitable, or wicked man; but it proceeded from a misapprehension of the character and objects of the religious movement which he witnessed, but could not comprehend. As this misapprehension not only led to a series of mistakes in the character of the early education given to James Herbert, his son, but as similar opinions have now for three-quarters of a century led to the erection of Methodism into a separate sect, without the pale and direct influence of the Church of England, as well as to other vast evils, it is proposed to devote the next chapter of "*YOUR LIFE*" to recording an interesting and important conversation between the old vicar and his biographer, *on the nature, history, influences, and attitude of Methodism.*

It is now time to return to the family circle at Epworth. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert resolved

after Miss Lovegrove had ceased to direct the education of their children, to make other and different arrangements. The subject of these memoirs had now reached the age of seven years, and as his temper was calm, his mind unusually sedate, and he had rather a superabundance of young talent, amounting almost to precocity, it was decided by all the family that he really *ought* to be brought up for a clergyman. After the usual discussions to which such "*first thoughts*" generally give rise, it was resolved that he should be placed with a clergyman in Hereford, whose soundness of views was guaranteed by his own bishop, and whose classical acquirements were the theme of very general praise. He was, of course, informed as to the destination of James Herbert for the Church, and was specially invited to make him a good Latin and Greek scholar. This was what most pleased Mr. Armstrong in the varied instructions and requests of the parents of his new pupil, since Latin and Greek were his favourite studies, and parsing and scanning with his lads was ever his delight.

It was at this period that *Ann Leese* commenced, in that part of England which adjoins

Hereford, her fanatical and extraordinary proceedings as the founder or chief of the SHAKERS; and Mr. Herbert had all his previous tendencies of aversion to all novelties in religion confirmed, by a scene which he witnessed in that part of England, when conducting young James to his future preceptor. The carriage was proceeding with James and his father towards the old town of Droitwich, on the road from Birmingham to Worcester, at which last place they proposed arriving that evening, and from thence the next day to proceed to Hereford, when their attention was drawn to masses of people on every side, all pressing forward in the same direction. There was much of seriousness in their air, and of energy in their movements, and they appeared bent either on much good or on great mischief. They were hastening with rapid steps in the direction of the then curious, but since destroyed, *chapel of St. Peter*. The old town of Droitwich looked in the distance as sad as usual, and Mr. Herbert had been descanting on the decay of a place once so celebrated as the *Salinæ* of the Romans. The church of St. Peter was an object of some interest from its antiquity, but Mr. Herbert did not fail to in-

form his son that Droitwich had always been distinguished for its loyalty : that it was the head-quarters of Charles the First, in 1645, when his army besieged the rebels in Hawkesley House, on the north side of Bromesgrove Lickey, and that so much did the burgesses signalize themselves by their attachment to the cause of their unhappy monarch, that he sent them a letter of thanks, which was long preserved in the town's archives. The chapel dependent on St. Peter's church, and towards which the crowds were apparently hastening, then stood on the bridge, through the middle of which the high road from Bromesgrove passed ; and as the congregation sat on one side of the road, whilst the pulpit and reading desk were on the other, it was not unaptly related in an old MS. in the British Museum, *that the cartway lay through the church.*

On arriving at this division the carriage passed with some difficulty. The cartway or roadway was blocked up by the curious, the trembling, the nervous, and the silent spectators : and many smiles and bows, civil requests and polite speeches, on the part of Mr. Herbert were necessary, to obtain a passage for his vehicle. The church was crammed,

but it was evident that there was something more 'than met the eye, and that it was no ordinary festival or preaching, which had summoned together so extraordinary an assembly. As soon as the chapel-way had been passed through, and Mr. Herbert, considered himself freed from the possibility of insult, he inquired of some three or four serious-looking men who stood in a knot, discussing with much earnestness the 'question which engaged all their powers of mind and soul, "What was the occasion of the meeting?" " *She* is going to preach," was the answer, and the word "*she*" was pronounced in so emphatic a tone, that Mr. Herbert deemed it prudent not to ask of *them*, at least, any 'explanations of who this "*she*" might be. They were evidently her disciples. He directed the coachman to proceed, with slowness, a few steps further, and asked most courteously of another knot, not of men, but of women, "Who is the *lady* who is about to preach?" The word "*lady*" evidently amused or surprised them.

"*Lady!*" said the youngest of them, with more of scorn than civility, "it is no *lady*; when did *ladies* preach? it is *Anne Leese*, the prophetess."

“ Anne Leese, the prophetess,” muttered Mr. Herbert to himself. “ I am not much wiser than I was : my best course is to proceed to the inn ; make there all the necessary inquiries ; and learn the whole truth of this silent, but not less real commotion.” The mistress of the inn, the master, the children, were all out. A cross, crooked, and by no means well-informed or cleanly old woman, took care of the house. The usual inmates had proceeded in the direction of the Chapel of St. Peter, and all he could learn was, that a tall, commanding, handsome woman was attracting great crowds, not *in* the chapel, but in its *environs*, by her strange doctrines, wonderful cries, and still more extraordinary jumping and shaking. She was the CHIEF OF THE SHAKERS ! It was now three o’clock in the afternoon of a warm day in the end of June ; and as soon as the travellers had procured some refreshment, they hastened with the rest of the town towards the Chapel of St. Peter. On their arriving at the chapel they found it evacuated ; it would seem that a passing shower of rain, which lasted but a quarter of an hour, had been the occasion of their seeking momentary shelter in that building—and that the

place of assembling was in a field not far removed. Men, women, and children, some with bundles under their arms, others evidently exhausted with their long walks; men with lanky hair, hanging profusely over their shoulders, and women with short petticoats, but wearing cotton drawers to the ankle, were all intent on gaining the point of attraction; whilst already a movement of a singular character was observed by Mr. Herbert, like the waving of corn during a somewhat high and boisterous wind; it was the gathering of the disciples of the schools of Ranters and Jumpers. During the absence of Mr. Herbert and his son at the inn, the summer shower and the fleecy clouds had gone over and were cleared away, and ANNE LEESE, the prophetess, was on the *camp ground*. Her habitual residence was MANCHESTER, but she had left that place on a Shaking excursion, and had been joined in her movements by some Welsh Jumpers, who had come out of the principality to meet her on her travels. Mr. Herbert observed that the large field in which they met was guarded by voluntary agents of the prophetess, who perambulated from side to side, and all of whom, as they approached each other, whispered in each



other's ears some words either of salutation or caution, as is the habit with the monks of La Trappe. When any one entered the field who, by his manner or tone, appeared likely to intend to disturb the proceedings of the day, a "*posse*" of these partisans soon came forward, first requested the individual to retire, and then expelled him if resistance was attempted. Of course this measure led to protests, to quarrels, and even to blows; but the possessors of the field were in too great a majority to render effectual any isolated opposition. In the centre of the field, on a sort of rough but solid platform, sate the Shakers' prophetess, or rather the profligate deceiver. She was tall, commanding, rather inclined to be pretty, smiled benignantlly on some chiefs of the Jumpers who had arrived to lend her their support and countenance, and at four o'clock, with her arms outstretched in an attitude more calculated to excite terror than love, she ordered the assembled multitudes to *keep silence*. The word "*silence*" was quickly repeated from mouth to mouth, and in less than a minute there was the silence of the grave.

"Friends and disciples!" she began, "listen

with awe to the word of God, as about to be revealed to you by me—by me, the elect lady, of whom it hath been written, ‘And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; and she, being with-child, cried, travelling in birth and pain, to be delivered. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up unto God and to his throne.’ Yes; I am her, in whom the Divinity dwells as truly as in Christ Jesus himself, with equal, nay, superior glory.”

Mr. Herbert felt a thrill of horror when this blasphemer had so far proceeded, and his first movement was not only one of revolt, but of a desire to retreat. It was too late. He, who had hoped from the position in which he first placed himself to withdraw at pleasure, now found that the field was full, that close battalions of the populace pressed on all parts around him, that the workmen from the salt springs had all arrived, that masses of the curious from all around had rendered escape on his part impossible, and that he had now no alternative but to remain.

“Against me, and me only, hath come forth the great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head. His tail is drawing the third part of the stars of heaven, and shall cast them to the earth, and he hath stood before me to devour my child so soon as it shall be born. But I shall prevail.”

When she said this her followers groaned with frantic fervour, and those who did not join in the cry, exposed themselves to no very amiable reprimand from such of her partisans or converts as were mixed up with the crowd.

“*He* will come to judge the world, but *I* am his forerunner. Endowed with gifts of tongues and of miracles, I have the power of reading your hearts and discovering what passeth within you. I am now travailing in birth for the whole world: no blessing can descend to any human being except by and through me; confess then to me your sins. You cannot conceal them from me. Confess and repent, and you shall be saved; but hypocrisy will be unavailing, and those who shall disbelieve me, and my predictions, will commit the unpardonable sin.”

This declaration led to some unintelligible

murmurs on the part of those, who, like the Herberts, had proceeded thither from curiosity; but those murmurs were drowned by the clamours, shrieks, cries, yells, and groans of her quite frantic adherents.

“The first resurrection is past; now you are to be guided by the Spirit; I am the teacher in his name; whom I will, I pardon; whom I will, I cure; whom I will, I make alive. I have power to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to cast out devils. I have a daily and hourly intercourse with the angelic choir; the spirits of the just are my companions whilst travailing in birth for you all; I can speak in all tongues in which I desire to speak; my followers will be the happiest in heaven, and are already the most blessed on earth.”

There was some sort of demi-opposition, at least so it appeared to Mr. Herbert, on the part of the chiefs of the *Jumpers* at this stage of the proceedings, perhaps because they would have preferred her saying “*among*” the most blessed on earth, and not positively “*the*” most blessed; but this movement was at once silenced by some few words she spoke in a low tone of voice to them, so that on their part there was no future interruption.

“ If you become my disciples you will form part of the 144,000 who are redeemed” from the earth; but do you know the condition? You must abandon marriage; my church is come out of the order of natural generation; and I introduce the beginning of heaven on earth.”

This was apparently the most objectionable passage, in the opinion of the ignorant and astounded throng, in the speech of Anne Leese, for there were long and strong murmurs of doubt, if not of disapprobation. This movement she perceived, and then, throwing herself in a menacing attitude and raising her voice to its highest pitch, she exclaimed, “

“ What! will you resist me? Will you dare to question my authority? Will you call down my wrath and my curses upon you? Tremble, tremble, for both your bodies and your souls, before you venture on such a course. I know all that is passing in your hearts. Every blasphemous smile, diabolic sneer, proud and haughty look in this field has been seen by me; and if you do not repent, believe, confess, and become my disciples, you shall be cursed in your basket, in your store, in your springs, on your couches, in your prospects here, and in

your hopes of heaven. *My* disciples may *laugh*, for *they* can be *joyful*; may *dance*, for they can be *merry*; may *sing*, for they can be *happy*. Believe—believe—believe.”

The Welsh Jumpers and Welsh working classes who were present cried “*Gogoniant! Gogoniant!*” (meaning Glory, glory); whilst the Shakers screamed “Amen, amen,” with such fury that Mr. Herbert shook with fear, and young James wept from horror.

“LET US SING,” said the blaspheming oracle of this fanatical throng; and, for nearly half an hour, those who were acquainted with her sort of music and melody, wailed in one continuous and discordant plaint, without metre or tune, their *past* want of belief in her and her mission.

“It is enough,” ejaculated this impostor, and the singing ceased.

“Begone, unbelief!” she continued; “wail no longer! Put on the garments of triumph and joy! the Elect one is here! You believe! oh yes, you believe: then joy, joy for ever; sing us a song of rapture!”

The song of rapture was quick and lively, but the words were only known to the initiated; and the wild cries at the end of each stanza

resembled the yells of savages as they raise on their bloody stakes the scalps of their enemies.

Such cries were at once succeeded by the peculiar antics of this class of fanatics.

“*Let us celebrate our victory over sin,*” cried this wretched woman; and that was the signal for the scenes which followed.

“You do not tremble as you ought,” said a brawny-armed woman, coarse, strong, vulgar, but mad with excitement, who stood near Mr. Herbert; and scizing him round the waist, turned him round and round so often, and with such violence, that both fell from exhaustion on the ground. Resistance on his part was vain; deeply for himself did he regret that his curiosity had led him to such a spot, but yet more deeply for his child.

The Shakers were about a hundred in number. They sung or screamed as they twirled themselves and occasionally each other, with amazing quickness and agility; and so convinced were these fanatics that it was the Spirit of God working in them which led them to these movements and gestures, that when dropping on the ground from fatigue, they exclaimed, “Blessed be God! praise to his

name !” whilst others cried out, “ Blessed be his servant Anne !” Some raised one arm in the air whilst they danced round in the smallest circle, and others raising both hands were vehement in their movements towards heaven.

The *Jumpers* were fewer in number, as they were only visitors ; but what they wanted in numerical strength they made up by their physical violence. After singing some Welsh stanzas of an exciting character with great rapidity, at least thirty times, and interspersing them with cries of “ *Gogoniant, gogoniant,*” a leader stepped forward, reminded them that David danced before the ark ; that the babe leaped in the womb of Elizabeth ; that the man whose lameness was removed leaped and praised God for the mercy which he had received ; and that Jumping was a token of the great joy and happiness of their present Jerusalem state, and of their victory over sin, the world, and death. He then began to jump with great elasticity, and to a surprising height. This was the signal for the rest : the Shakers and the Jumpers vied with each other in their rockings, groanings, cries, and frantic fury, and the scene was rendered frightful by



the shrieks of many an alarmed spectator, the moans of fainting women, and the hysterical sobs of some of the half-maddened and yet exhausted fanatics.

The sun had long set on this scene of wild and incoherent turbulence, before Mr. Herbert could release himself from the pressing ranks of those who surrounded him, and who were more or less affected or influenced by the proceedings they witnessed. At length an opening was made by the bearing away of some new disciples, who, from want of habit or practice, were unable to resist the depressing and enfeebling results of such physical efforts; and Mr. Herbert, overcome with horror, disgust, and grief, gained, he knew not how, the inn at Droitwich, threw himself on his knees, with real and unaffected devotion, and as he lay on his bed and sought repose, thanked God, with all the fervour of which he was susceptible, that he was a member of the Church of England!

## CHAPTER III.

A CHAPTER ON METHODISM—ITS EARLY DAYS—FIRST PRINCIPLES — CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHARACTER — CHANGES — PREACHERS — CONTEMPORARY HISTORY — ITINERANCY—AND PROPOSED UNION WITH THE CHURCH.

“LET us have our promised chat on Methodism to-day,” said the old vicar—“the morning is favourable for a quiet stroll—the air is mild and balmy, and though at eighty-three years of age my legs will not carry me so fast as yours can do, yet you will, I know, accommodate your strength and vigour to my age and weakness, and we may manage to get through the whole of the subject to which I have so often referred in the course of our conversations on my past life.” This proposal was accepted; and as rather a strong feeling was then entertained by the biographer of the vicar against Wesleyan Methodism in its relation to the Church of England, he at once stated such to be the case.

*Biographer.* I can scarcely tell how it is, but so it is, that a large portion of the clergy

with whom from time to time it has been my happiness to be acquainted, I have found entertaining a stronger aversion to the Wesleyan Methodists than even to dissenters. Some have regarded them as timid or cowardly dissenters; some have looked on them as insidious enemies of the Church; some have spoken of them as more dangerous to the Establishment in their parishes than any other body of separatists; and some have even gone so far as to say that they were, with all their affected respect for, and gratitude to the Church, seeking gradually to undermine it. And from all I have *yet* learnt of the early history of this sect or body, I am disposed to think, that, from the first time they appeared, to the present day, the clergy of our Church have always distrusted them, and from the commencement of their career discovered in them grounds for apprehension and alarm; whether just or not, I am not prepared to say.

*Vicar.* There was one fact, Sir, which always operated in the earlier days of Methodism against the Wesleys. It was this—the families of their parents were *dissenters*. Both the father and mother of the Wesleys were brought up Nonconformists. The High Church prin-

ciples of those times were very different indeed to those of the period in which we now live. The English dissenters, by their more than suspected loyalty, by their decidedly anti-orthodox doctrines, and by their Socinian tendencies, had opposed to them all that was episcopal, monarchical, and Hanoverian; and they, in their turn, were so vehement in their *diatribes* against the Church, that the clergy looked on Nonconformists with horror. The Vicar of Epworth, I mean Samuel Wesley, was aware of this special motive of opposition to his son; and when that son assisted him as his curate, the former was quite as High Church, as to discipline, as even the most zealous of the clergy then desired.

*Biographer.* And yet John Wesley, in establishing preaching at the Foundry Chapel, must have been aware that he acted irregularly, and contrary to the discipline of the Church.

*Vicar.* Unquestionably he must, Sir; but you have skipped over a period of not less than eleven years of his life, and those eleven years were not the least important of his history. What did he begin by doing, Sir, in 1729? Simply meeting other young men to read the Greek Testament. This was neither

an irregular act, nor an unwise or unprofitable appropriation of his time. During the years 1730, 1731, and 1732, he continued this practice, and was joined by some of his pupils, for he was a Fellow of Lincoln College, and Greek Lecturer and Moderator of the classes. When Mr. Ingham, Mr. Broughton, Mr. Clayton, and Mr. Hervey joined him in those meetings, which were of a purely religious character, he was one of the strictest Churchmen of the day. Without relying on works as a means of salvation, he communicated every week, fasted often, devoted a large portion of his time to works of charity, and took the works of Bishop Taylor as his religious guide. During this period no one was more attentive than himself to Church of England discipline and practice. His desire to remain at Oxford, and his refusal to act on the advice of his family, and seek to obtain the next presentation to the living of Epworth after the death of his father, proceeded likewise from motives perfectly in harmony with his avowed attachment to the Church of England. He desired to remain at Oxford, the head-quarters of High Church principles, not to dissuade men out of those principles, not to promote dissent, to which he

was opposed, and not even to encourage the formation of any new class of separatists which he might think more in harmony with the New Testament; but to endeavour to inculcate on the minds of his pupils, and of those with whom he came in contact, the necessity for a revival of religion, not out of, *but within the pale of that Church* of which he was a sincere and devoted servant.

*Biographer.* But do you not think that Mr. Wesley had *then* an idea of forming a sect separate from the Church, though in correspondence with it, and which should one day bear his name?

*Vicar.* Most certainly not; for although his classical tastes and acquirements, as well as his conviction that he could, by remaining at Oxford, render great service to the cause of Episcopacy and of vital Christianity, led him to prefer that residence: yet, when the trustees of the new colony of Georgia, who wished to send out clergymen to administer to the spiritual wants of the colonists, and also to attempt the conversion of the Indians, applied to Mr. Wesley and his Oxford friends, he consented to become one of their number. During the time that he remained at Frederica and Savan-

nah, he conformed strictly to the discipline of the National Church of England, and adhered rigidly to its rubric when he refused to administer in that country the sacrament to those, whom he judged unworthy of receiving it. When he returned to England and set about examining the basis of his faith, and on reviewing his religious character and state before God, he perused the works, not of separatists, but of the clergy of the Church. His intimacy with Böhler, the Moravian, has been thought by some to have led to a wish on his part to establish a new and important sect, but I have not discovered any facts in favour of that opinion.

*Biographer.* Still, Sir, it is a fact, that soon after the conversion of Mr. Wesley in 1738, the date which he assigns to that event, he began to preach a doctrine which was apparently new to him, *viz.* that of justification by grace through faith, formed a religious society in Fetter-lane, and printed the rules as those of the “orders of a religious society meeting in that place, in obedience to the command of God by Saint James, and by the advice of Peter Böhler.”

*Vicar.* This was an *irregular* act of a *regular*

Churchman; for though Mr. Wesley and his friends met there, and assembled with the Moravians, they remained members of the Church, and received the communion from the hands of episcopally ordained ministers.

*Biographer.* But when Mr. Wesley visited Germany, and studied attentively the economy of the Moravians, do you not believe that he then contemplated the formation of a separate sect from the Church of England?

*Vicar.* I think not. Remember that at that time, and on his return to England, the whole of the members of his Society, of Church of England Christians, with a few Moravians included, were only thirty-two in number; and I am convinced that his visit to Germany and Holland was made rather with the view of establishing his own mind as to his duty, and enlightening it as to the characteristics of Moravianism, than of forming out of the Moravian principles of government any basis for a new sect or opinion in the country. Here commenced the first error of the clergy of our Church with respect to Mr. Wesley. They shut their churches against him. They were afraid that their coldness and formality should become contaminated by his zeal. They were



afraid that their tendency to rely on works would be overthrown by the doctrines of faith he preached; and although, according to his own account, his eight bands of men made but a total of sixty-four, yet so averse were the clergy of those times to the introduction of any new elements of truth, light, and faith, that they preferred greatly to isolate Methodism, and leave it to its own resources, thus setting it up as an opponent, rather than introducing what was good of it into the Church itself.

*Biographer.* But what do you say to the conduct of Mr. Wesley in following the example of Whitefield, and preaching in the open air.

*Vicar.* Undoubtedly this was irregular; but who had driven him to this proceeding? He was most averse to it. He felt for a long time that it was a practice that was neither orderly nor decent; but the churches were closed against him; persecution had begun to arouse in him his latent energies: and like the pent-up stream, which if allowed to pursue its accustomed course, and to pass on in its noiseless career, would carry with it health and plenty, yet when prevented by artificial obstacles from passing on in its wonted channels, will at last

overcome all impediments, and sweep away before it the vegetation and the productions it formerly promoted and increased; so Wesley and his partisans commenced their out-door proceedings as their "*dernier resort*," but not until some years of experience had convinced them that the clergy would continue to oppose all their attempted efforts *within* the walls of the national churches.

*Biographer.* Do you intend, then, Sir, to justify these preachings in the open air, and this disobedience to the laws and discipline of the Church, of which both the Wesleys and Whitefield were members?

*Vicar.* Certainly not, Sir; it was their duty to have availed themselves of all such means as were still at their disposal, such as conversations, private meetings for reading and prayer, the distribution of Bibles, Prayer-books, suitable printed sermons, essays, and small treatises, and to have left the opening of the doors of the churches, as well as of the hearts of men to the truth, to Him, who is the Head of his own church. But I am merely replying to the objection often brought forward against the founders of Methodism, that they were separatists, and desired to establish a religion bearing

their own name, instead of to introduce new elements of vital religion into the Church itself.

*Biographer.* Then, from the time they preached in the open air, you think that John Wesley ceased to be an Episcopalian?

*Vicar.* By no means. Neither himself nor his brother Charles ceased to remain members of the Church of England. When Charles Wesley was summoned before the Archbishop of Canterbury, he professed a warm attachment for the Church; when at Oxford, and the dean was greatly displeased with him, he would not do otherwise than declare his love for the Church; and, in order to show in the following year that the desire of both the Wesleys was not to offend the heads of that Church to which they were sincerely attached, but simply to seek to convert the souls of men, they devoted a considerable period to the evangelization of the colliers of Kingswood. This was an obscure and unostentatious, though important, work. Here, again, the clergy of that period took an unwise stand with reference to the two Wesleys. Instead of receiving the Kingswood converted colliers into the bosom of the Church, by administering to them the holy sacrament, they

refused so to do, thus not only rejecting useful materials for the Church itself, but throwing them off on the dissenting separatists of the day, or compelling them to erect themselves into a new body. So when Mr. Wesley proceeded to Wales, the clergy of the principality refused him admission into their churches, though he was a regularly ordained minister, a decided lover of the Episcopal form of church government, and desirous above all things of preaching in the national pulpits. At this period of Mr. Wesley's history, when asked by a brother clergyman on what points he differed from the Church of England, he answered, that, to the best of his knowledge, he differed in none; the doctrines of the Church of England being those which he preached.

*Biographer.* But what can you say, Sir, of his connection with the Moravians, who at that time, at least in London, entertained some mystic notions, as to ceasing from ordinances, and waiting for faith in silence?

*Vicar.* Mr. Wesley, Sir, was never a Moravian, either in doctrine, discipline, or practice. He joined their Fetter-lane meetings because Böhler, their leader, had been instrumental in his conversion; because the Moravians were

alive to and anxious about the then cold and lifeless state of religion amongst all classes of the community; because they were as much alarmed as he was at the growth of Socinianism among the dissenters; and finally, because having been virtually excluded by the clergy from their intercourse and fellowship, he availed himself of this means of exciting in the minds of some men, at least, attention to the decay of spiritual religion in the nation. But when he saw the evils of the Moravian system—its uncertain character, and, above all, its separation from the Church of England, of which he continued to be a warm admirer and supporter—he detached himself wholly from that body; and then, being left to himself and his own resources, formed that Methodist Society in 1740, which has since had such amazing success throughout the whole of Great Britain and on the continent of America.

*Biographer.* From 1740, then, you think that Mr. Wesley and his followers separated from the Church of England?

*Vicar.* Oh no! certainly not. For when, in 1743, he drew up a set of rules, which continue to be in force to the present time, and the observance of which was then, and is now, the

condition of membership, those rules were of such a character as not to exclude any Churchman. The sole object was to assist the members to make "their calling and election sure," by cultivating the religion of the heart, and by a holy conformity to the laws of Christ.

*Biographer.* But what do you say to the employment by Mr. Wesley of men, not *episcopally ordained*, as preachers?

*Vicar.* They were little more in the first instance than Sunday-school teachers in our Church schools, Sir. Charles Wesley was always opposed to it; and as some clergyman was nearly every two or three months coming forward to offer his services, he counselled waiting. John Wesley was more eager than his brother, as to the conversion of men; but when Mr. Maxfield, one of his first preachers, commenced his labours, so little was there of design on the part of Mr. Wesley to form a sect, that he only authorized him, in his own absence from London, to pray with the society and advise them as might be needful. He was not even allowed to preach; and although he afterwards suffered him to do so, yet he felt that some apology was even due for this, and admitted that if the parochial clergy would but

have taken the charge of those, who in different places had been turned to God by his ministry, and by that of his fellow-labourers, he would not have appointed preachers. These preachers also, even when named, had no power given to them to administer sacraments; but Mr. Wesley and his early friends all communicated at the altar of the National Church.

*Biographer.* Still, Mr. Wesley by such conduct did in fact establish a distinct sect.

*Vicar.* Without intending to do so. He declared that he should have delighted to have resigned to the spiritual care of his authorized brethren of the Established Church those who had been converted under his ministry; but that as the clergy refused to take charge of those converts, believing them to be dissenters from the Church, he, Mr. Wesley, and his coadjutors resorted to the expedient *not* of ordaining ministers, for that they did not feel themselves justified in doing, but of appointing preachers to meet the rest as often as they could, in order to confirm them in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation.

*Biographer.* But when Mr. Wesley perceived that the clergy would not consent to admit

bers in vast variety, they have spacious courts, lovely gardens, parterres of flowers, fields always green and surrounded with shrubs and spice trees ; there the angels are formed into harmonious and blessed societies ; dwell in contiguous habitations, disposed, after the manner of our cities, in streets, walks, and squares, which I have had the privilege to walk in, to examine, and to enter their houses and behold all that was passing, not in a trance, not in a vision, not in a day or night dream ; but in the day with my mortal eyes wide open, in this very terrestrial world which we inhabit, whilst the eyes of my mind were opened ; and though I stood or sat on the earth, the eyes of my soul saw with distinctness all that passed in paradise. There I beheld Christ, who is the Father, who is the Son, and who is the Holy Spirit ; not three persons, but one person ; not the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost ; but as in every individual man there is a soul, a body, and proceeding operation, so there is but one Jehovah, God, who is at once the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Regenerator ; but it is Jesus, and Jesus alone.

*Dr. Short.* Now you must observe, Baron, that when I say I cannot believe this, I do not



deny your belief, or your conviction that you speak the truth, nor do I choose to impugn either your own want of faith in yourself, or your convictions that you are doing right in making known to others what you denominate special revelation. But as I could not hope to prevail on a Pagan to believe in Christianity, unless I had evidences of the truth of that religion to support my demand for his credence, so I require of you something more than mere assertion before I can put my faith in these statements.

*Swedenborg.* But your views of the Holy Scripture are all blind, erroneous, unspiritual views. The sacred Scriptures contain three distinct senses, called *celestial*, *spiritual*, and *natural*, which are united by correspondencies. In each of these senses it is divine truth; but you, and the rest of mankind, only receive these Scriptures in their *natural* sense, whilst to me has been made known their *spiritual* significations. The glorious angels who inhabit the three heavens, they also have a sense in which the Scriptures are understood by them, in their *celestial* sense; and there is a perfect system of correspondencies which had been wholly lost from the time of Job to the epoch

in 1743, when they were revived *in me*. In me is this divine key to the *spiritual* sense of the sacred Scripture, every page of which was written by correspondencies; that is, by such things in the natural world as correspond unto and signify things in the spiritual world.

*Dr. Short.* But it is not revealed to our *natural* senses, to say nothing of our spiritual ones, that you, Baron Swedenborg, should be endowed with such powers. There is no prophecy remaining unaccomplished of such a character, and as you profess to explain Christianity, and not to originate a wholly new system, we must look to the revelation made to us by the Word of God, and examine your pretensions with that unerring rule.

*Swedenborg.* Your eyes are still closed. You cannot discern *spiritual* things. I am the representative of the greatest event which has transpired since the ascension of our Lord to heaven. I am the representative of the New Jerusalem Church. In the year 1757, now thirteen years since, God so filled me with his Spirit that his second coming was effected by my instrumentality. Christ never promised to reign *personally* on earth, but to reign in his church, in a church that he should found, which should be the *New Jerusalem*, and this is now esta-

blished. The Lord hath manifested himself before me, his servant, he has opened the sight of my spirit, he has let me into the spiritual world, he has granted me to see the heavens, and the hells, and to converse with angels and spirits; and since that blessed period I have never received any thing belonging to the doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church from any angels, but from the Lord alone, whilst engaged in reading his Word.

*Dr. Short.* But if the mere declarations of *uninspired* men are to be received and admitted as true, what is there to prevent any man, any of those, for instance, who in Sweden or in England may have adopted your views, from hereafter setting up in opposition to you, and declaring that he has also had revelations made to him, and that God has alone shone into his heart, to give him to perceive and understand the *spiritual* meaning of the Word of God?

*Swedenborg.* Yes, if I were an *uninspired* man, as you assert, then your observation would hold good; but, because I am an inspired man, it falls to the ground. To the end that the Lord may be constantly present with the New Jerusalem Church, which I am sent to esta-

blish, he has revealed to me the *spiritual* sense of his Word, in which those divine truths are in its light, and in this light he is constantly present.

*Dr. Short.* But can you communicate to me this spiritual sense?

*Swendenborg.* I can communicate to you what is this spiritual sense, but, unless you are a real member of Christ's New Jerusalem Church, your spiritual eyes will be unable to discover and appreciate the spiritual truth and sense of what I may and can place before your natural eyes.

*Dr. Short.* This system of your's, Baron, is little better than a revival, with some additions and changes, of the doctrines of the Mystics, with this difference, that Madame Guyon may be looked upon as their chief; but happily we have no Archbishop of Canterbury, as she had one of Cambray, to second her errors. They allegorised scripture, at the same time not denying the literal sense. The word Jerusalem to them was *naturally* the capital of Judea, but *allegorically*, the Church militant; morally, a believer; and mysteriously, heaven. And when they spake of light,—natural light, that light which was created by God, when he said “Let

there be light, and there was light," they interpreted "*Beatitude*, or the light of glory." But what are the tenets of your system?

*Swedenborg.* I neither praise nor condemn the Mystics. I am the New Jerusalem Church: the second coming of the Lord has been effected by me: Jehovah God is the creator and preserver of heaven and earth; but he is the Saviour Jesus, and not God the Father. Jehovah Jesus is our God, and all who believe in him will be saved. All evils come from the devil. Good affections come from God. Man is here kept in a state of spiritual equilibrium between the devil and God, and has the capacity in himself of turning decidedly either to God or the devil. Man is not life, but only a recipient of life. God is life. All men may be saved, whether Christians, Jews, Mahometans, or Pagans, if they live according to the best of their knowledge and understanding. The Christian religion is the best, as more immediately derived from the one only God of heaven and earth, the Lord Jesus Christ. On the death of the material body, which will never be re-assumed, man rises again to his spiritual body, wherein he exists in a perfect human form, with every faculty which he before en-

joyed. Children, who die before they come to the use of their reason and the exercise of their own judgment, whether baptized or unbaptized, whether within the Christian church or without it, are received into heaven by the Lord, and, after instruction or improvement in understanding and wisdom, participate in all the happiness and perfection of angels. There is not in the universal heaven a single angel that was created such at first, nor a single devil in all hell that had been created an angel of life, and was afterwards cast out of heaven; but devils and angels are of the human race: those in heaven are such as lived in the world in heavenly faith and love, those in hell such as lived altogether according to the principles of self-love and the love of the world. True conjugal love, which can only exist between one husband and one wife, is a primary characteristic of the New Church, being grounded in the marriage or conjunction of good and truth, and corresponding with the marriage of Love and his Church. Conjugal love is more celestial, spiritual, holy, and pure than any other love in angels or men. The *last judgment*, so frequently spoken of in the Gospels and in the Apocalypse, being a separation of the evil from the

good in the spiritual world, was actually accomplished thirteen years ago, as I have already told you, *i. e.* in the year 1757. Then it was that the former heaven and the former earth, or the Old Church, passed away, and the foundation of a new Church was laid in me, wherein all things are become new.

*Dr. Short.* New, indeed! Nothing can be more novel; but again, and again, Baron, I must ask you for *your proofs*.

*Swedenborg.* How can you understand my proofs when they are all spiritual, and when you are yet carnal, and have not the eyes of your mind opened to perceive these truths? I tell you again, that as an act of mercy towards the human race, which would otherwise have perished in eternal death, the second advent of the Lord has already taken place, and still continues whilst I am speaking to you; this coming is not in *person*, as you and all those whose spiritual eyes are still closed, imagine; but a coming in the power and glory of the spiritual sense of his holy Word, as demonstrated in the theological writings of his unworthy but chosen servant now before you. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, is now at this moment descending from God out of

heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Dr. Short and such of his friends as were collected to meet this new sectarian, observed, that at the close of the last phrase he bowed several times; and they inquired of him why it was that he made those salutations.

*Swedenborg.* A precious visit of angels was then manifested to me. I saw their bright faces, and witnessed their blessed love. Abraham also passed before me, the first for patriarchal faith and obedience, and my natural frame, under the influence of my spiritual vision, insensibly bowed to do them reverence. But what can your cold, dull, lifeless, unspiritual minds as yet know of these bright realities? You only see, as yet, the *sun* of the *natural* world; but I see the *sun* of the *spiritual* world, which is a spiritual sun composed of pure love. There is this sun. It exists—quite as really as the natural sun, which warms your bodies. The planets too! How ignorant you are of them. You look at them as lights created merely for our planet, but I have seen them all; they are inhabited by human beings; I have seen millions of planetary bodies revolving about other suns in the starry heavens, all the



abodes of men; my spirit has been amongst them: and what know you, my friends, of the correspondencies of spirits the one with the other? When the spiritual faculties of a man are, like mine, so far opened as to enable him to see and converse with spirits and angels, then such spirits and angels can see through his eyes the natural objects of this world, and hear through his ears the conversation that passes among men, which otherwise they cannot do. So, again, the man, whose spiritual mind is open, may, by being brought into a similar state with an inhabitant of some distant earth, in like manner see through the eyes of such inhabitant (if his spiritual mind be open) the natural objects of *his* world, and hear through *his* ears the natural sounds then produced. Inasmuch as it hath been granted to me by the Lord to be at one and the same time in the spiritual world and in the natural world, and thereby to converse with angels as with men and thus to become acquainted with the states of those who after death flock together into that heretofore unknown world; for I have conversed with all my relatives and friends, and also with kings and princes, and men of learning, after their departure out of

this life, and this for the last twenty-seven years, without interruption ; therefore I am able to describe the states of men after death from lively experience, both in relation to such as have lived good lives, and such as have lived evil.

*Dr. Short.* And what idea can you supply us of another world, different to that which has been communicated by God in his own Word ?

*Swedenborg.* You are all in the dark, my friends, wholly in the dark, as to a future state. You believe that man, after death, is a mere soul ; that the soul is something like ether or air, and that it is like the breath which goes out of a man's body when he dies, in which, nevertheless, there resides some vital principle. It has been conceived that this vital principle neither has the faculty of seeing, such as belongs to the eye ; nor of hearing, such as belongs to the ear ; nor of speaking, such as belongs to the organs of speech ; but, on the contrary, man, after death, is as much a man as he was before, and so little changed, that he does not know but he is still living in the former world ; for he sees, hears, and speaks as in the former world ; he walks, runs, and

means should be carried on by, and in the Church; but these conditions were rare, and the Wesleys were unwisely regarded as separatists. I say nothing of the active and cruel opposition made to him by a few depraved men. The opposition was on the whole not greater than might have been expected; but it is surprising that more were not sensible to the spiritual advantages which would have resulted to the *National Church*, by preventing the religious movement among the people from becoming detached from Episcopal influence.

*Biographer.* The violent opposition of the clergy to Mr. Wesley proceeded, it appears to me, from *three* causes:—*first*, from the real decay of vital Christianity in the country, a disregard for practical religion, and a contempt for religious ordinances; *second*, from the example of a dissolute court, which spread its influence among all classes of society, the Puritanism of a former age having found its counterpart in the open licentiousness of that which succeeded; and *third*, from an apprehension on the part of many that Mr. Wesley had some connection with, or sympathy for, the cause of the Pretender. In various parts of Mr. Wesley's Journal, we find instances recorded of the

clergy denouncing him as a Papist, Jesuit, seducer, and, even as a *bringer-in of the Pretender*.

*Vicar.* There were *other* reasons, Sir, for the opposition made to him. The period antecedent to that in which Mr. Wesley flourished, had not been favourable to the moral and religious improvement of the people. The hopeful progress of the principles of the Reformation had been interrupted by the civil wars; and the bad passions and tumultuous feelings, which those wars had called into play, had not subsided when he appeared in the arena. The religious fanaticism of the Puritans had not also been forgotten; and all pretensions to personal piety were treated by the mass of the people, as the remains of that Puritanism they had been taught, to ridicule and distrust. Even religious forms were treated with indifference and contempt, and church-going was a practice which had very near fallen into disuse. When then the lower orders saw the Wesleys preaching in the open air, whilst the churches were three-fourths empty, they could but ascribe their exclusion from the church pulpits either to the facts that they were teaching new and strange doctrines, that they were secretly

opposed to the Church and the government, and favourable to the Pretender; or else that they were a revival of that Puritanism which was, in *their* opinion, even more hateful than Jacobinism itself.

*Biographer.* At the same time we must not exaggerate to our own minds the moral and religious depression, or falling off of days which produced such distinguished men as Secker, Butler, Gibson, and Burnet.

*Vicar.* But which also produced Herbert, Hobbes, Toland, Blount, Mandeville, Shaftesbury, Tindal, Morgan, Woolston, Chubb, and Bolingbroke. The sunken state, Sir, of Christianity during the civil wars, and the contests of embittered parties, were the proximate causes of English Deism. "They precipitated the natural revulsion of overloaded reason to the opposite extreme of absolute scepticism. Not a single doctrine or evidence in the whole compass of Christianity escaped the sifting or trial not only of those philosophers, but of many of the clergy." And what was the opinion of *Secker* himself? Did he not declare that "an open and professed disregard to religion had become, through a variety of unhappy circumstances, the distinguishing character of

that age?" Did not *Bishop Butler* say that he knew not how it had come to pass, but that it had so fallen out, "that Christianity was not so much as considered an object of inquiry, but that it had at length been discovered to be fictitious?" Did not *Bishop Gibson*, at the very period that John Wesley commenced his religious meetings at Oxford, write, that the sifting and denying of Christianity was done under colours and pretences of several kinds? "One, under pretence of opposing the encroachments of Popery (thereby to recommend himself to the unwary Protestant reader), had laboured at once to set aside all Christian ordinances, and the very being of a Christian ministry and a Christian church." *Another*, "under colour of great zeal for the Jewish dispensation and the literal meaning of Scripture, had been endeavouring to overthrow the foundations of the Christian religion." *A third*, pretending to raise the actions and miracles of our Saviour to a more exalted and spiritual meaning, had laboured to take away their reality, and by that to destroy one of the principal evidences of Christianity. *Others* had shown a great zeal for *natural* religion in opposition to *revealed*, with no other view, as it

seems, than to get rid of the restraints of revealed religion." And then, if we turn to *Bishop Burnet*, does he not declare that, in his time, "the clergy had less authority, and were under more contempt than those of any church in Europe; for they were much the most remiss in their labours, and the least severe in their lives?" Did he not even go so far as to declare that the ordination, *i. e.* "the Ember" weeks, were the burden and grief of his life, and that the much greater part of those who came to be ordained were ignorant to a degree not to be apprehended by those who were not obliged, like himself, to know it? And further, that the ignorance of some was such, that they would appear not even to know enough to be admitted to the holy sacrament? Did he not ask, when reviewing this state of things, "What are we like to grow to? In such a condition, how are we to deal with any adversary, atheist, Papist, or dissenter, or in any sort to promote the honour of God, and carry on the great concerns of the Gospel?"

*Biographer.* Very true; and yet this same Bishop Burnet records that "clamours of scandal in any of the clergy *are not* frequent, and God be thanked for it."

*Vicar.* Yes ; but I will go on with the passage, for I remember it well ; “ but a remiss, unthinking course of life, with little or no application to study, and the bare performance of that which, if not done, would draw censure when complained of, without even pursuing the pastoral care in any suitable degree, is but too common, as well as too evident.” The fact is, Sir, the “ whole head was sick, and the whole heart was faint,” and philosophers, Churchmen, Papists, and dissenters were all infected. One of the dissenters of those times, Dr. Guyse, admitted, in 1729, of his own party, “ that the present modish turn of religion looked as if they begun to think that they had no need of a Mediator ; but that all their concerns were managed with God as an absolute God. The religion of nature makes up,” he added, “ the darling topic of our age ; and the religion of Jesus is valued only for the sake of that topic, and only so far as it carries on the light of nature, and is a bare improvement of that kind of light. All that is restrictively Christian, or that is peculiar to Christ ; every thing concerning him that has not its apparent foundation in natural light, or that goes beyond its principles, is waived, and banished, and de-



spised; and even moral duties themselves, which are essential to the very being of Christianity, are usually harangued upon without any evangelical turn or reference to Christ, as "fruits of righteousness to the praise and glory of God by him." They are placed in the room of Christ, are set up independent of him, and are urged upon principles, and with views, ineffectual to secure their practice, and more suited to the sentiments and temper of a heathen than of those who take the whole of their religion from Christ."

*Biographer.* So that the moral and religious characters of all men and of all parties needed reformation?

*Vicar.* Most undoubtedly, and the more so, as the great and distinguished writers of those times exerted themselves rather to sap, than to support the foundations of religion. *Herbert*, for example, substituted a natural theology for revealed doctrine; and, by assigning man's natural instinct as the source of his knowledge of truth, and the universality of the reception of those truths as the test of their being thus decreed, laid a broad foundation for all the theories and criticisms of his successors. Then *Blount*, he had disguised the distinctive

character of Christian miracles; Shaftesbury had attacked, from a false point of view, the morality of the Gospel; Woolston and Collins had unfairly separated the evidence in favour of Christianity from prophecy and miracles; and Tindal had propounded the theory of rationalism with plausibleness and consistency, but without depth. Thus, in no period of the history of our beloved Church was reformation more required than twenty years before and after my birth, which was the time when Methodism took its rise and established itself firmly in this country.

*Biographer.* So that you look for an apology for Mr. Wesley's *irregular* proceedings as a *regular* Churchman, from the sunken condition of Christianity, within and without the Church, during the greater part of the time occupied by him in founding Methodism?

*Vicar.* Precisely so; and this is just the ground he took himself, for on many occasions he examined his own proceedings with the scrutinizing eye of an honest and conscientious Churchman, desirous, as far as possible, of avoiding even the appearance of separatism. One of our modern writers, whose attachment to the Church cannot admit of a doubt, I mean

Doctor Coplestone, has said, “ that Mr. Wesley found thousands of his countrymen, though nominally Christians, yet as ignorant of true Christianity as infidels and heathens ; and, in too many instances, ignorant, either through the inattention of the government in not providing for increased numbers, or through the carelessness and neglect of those whom the National Church had appointed to be their pastors.”

*Biographer.* Yet is it not a fact, that Mr. Wesley, whom you and Doctor Coplestone, as well as many others, contend was a sincere and decided Episcopalian, formed at least a fraternity within the Church which was governed by a discipline differing from that of the Church, unrecognized by its ecclesiastical superiors, and exempt from their control and jurisdiction ?

*Vicar.* Undoubtedly that was the result *in the end*, but not so much during his life as subsequent to his death. The Methodism of Mr. Wesley was *irregular Church-ism*. The Methodism of the days in which we live is Wesleyanism. There was a time in the history of Mr. Wesley's life when he was a *practical* example of Bishop *Taylor's* Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying ; of *Kempis's* Chris-

tian Pattern; of *Law's* Notions of Christian Perfection, and of his Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life. He was an Episcopalian High Churchman of the orthodox and stiffest school of duty and good works. At a little later period, in his life he held opinions of a high Catholic character, and made antiquity a co-ordinate rather than subordinate rule with Scripture; admitting several doubtful writings as undoubted evidences of antiquity, extending antiquity even to the errors at the end of the fourth century, and believing more practices to have been universal in the ancient church than ever were so. In all this, however, there was nothing of dissent, separatism, or any doctrine or dogma (except a little of what we call Catholic Churchism) unknown to, or disapproved by the Church of which he was a member. \*

*Biographer.* Why, then, were the clergy unanimous, or nearly so, in excluding him from their pulpits?

*Vicar.* I think, Sir, that in addition to the reasons I have enumerated in the course of our conversation, there is one which deserves attention, and that is the peculiarity of his doctrine, "*present* salvation by faith." His preaching led to "scenes," to wild and extravagant cries

and shrieks, and to a pretty general belief amongst those of the vulgar and ignorant who became attached to him, that he could *almost* perform miracles, and that he was something more than merely an able and evangelical clergyman of the Church of England. Besides this, Mr. Wesley formed part of certain societies, not merely approved by himself, but by George Whitefield, James Hervey, and others, whose "strange way of preaching in the fields" shocked, for several years, John Wesley himself. If Mr. Wesley could have been separated entirely from the movement which was going on in other quarters, apparently connected with his cause and opinions, if not with himself, there can be little doubt that he would have been admitted, before he commenced field-preaching, into *many more* pulpits than he was allowed to preach in; after he adopted that system, there appeared to the clergy to be an insurmountable barrier erected between him and themselves. He admits himself that field-preaching was a sudden expedient, a thing submitted to rather than chosen, although afterwards he defended the practice.

*Biographer.* And yet the fiftieth canon of our Church recognizes the principle of *itiner-*

*ancy*, and even admits itinerants, licensed by the bishops and universities, to administer sacraments.

*Vicar.* Yes : and Mr. Wesley took, at one time, still higher ground, for he maintained, in his defence, “that not having been appointed at his ordination to any congregation at all, but having been simply ordained a member of that college of divines, founded to overturn all heresies and defend the faith,” that he had the *right* to itinerate, to preach in the open air, and even, if he had thought fit, to administer the sacraments to those so assembled. But this was nothing better than special pleading, since the *irregularity* of his conduct as a clergyman was too evident to require proof, and the only justification he could offer was the state of the Church, and of all religious parties during the first forty years of his irregular ministrations. There was another ground of defence where he was, I think, more successful. He contended that his labours were necessary to supply the lack of service in the Church. He said to the then Bishop of London, “Here are, in and near Moorfields, ten thousand poor souls for whom Christ died, rushing headlong into hell. Is Dr. Bulkeley, the parochial minister, both

willing and able to stop them? If so, let it be done, and I have no place in these parts. I go and call other sinners to repentance. But if, after all he has done, and all he can do, they are still in the broad way to destruction, let me see if God will, put a word even in my mouth."

*Biographer.* But still, did not all these irregularities, however well-meant and pious, lead him to form distinct societies, wholly without the pale of Church discipline, and placed by him solely under his supervision?

*Vicar.* Undoubtedly they did; for whilst the itinerancy of the Church of England, which is, in fact, the principle of the Church Mission societies, places the converts under the direction of the Established clergy, the itinerancy of John Wesley placed them under his own direction, or under that of preachers named by him. This, however, he always insisted might have been prevented, if the clergy would have met him half-way, and would either have admitted him into their pulpits, or would have received into their folds all his converts. In default of this co-operation, he established *Thursday evening meetings*, and these were afterwards called societies. At these meetings the new and old

converts assembled, and the *catechumens* met apart from the congregations. I feel convinced, however, that Mr. Wesley, neither in the outset, nor at any period of his career, had any intention of setting himself up in opposition to the Church of England.

*Biographer.* When those societies began to be formed, the clergy of our Church should surely have interfered, and have offered to take the charge of those who attended at the parish churches after their conversion, to receive the sacrament.

*Vicar.* Precisely so; and Doctor Coplestone is of the same opinion. He has said, that then was the precise period when that breach should have been prevented, which may now require the care and prudence of ages to close. It has been admitted by the Rev. Richard Watson, one of the most eminent *preachers* of the present age, either within or without the walls of our church, “that it would indeed have been more satisfactory, if a pious clergyman had put himself at the head of these society meetings, afforded the people his counsel, and restrained any irregularities or errors which might arise; and had clergymen so qualified and disposed been found, the Church



would have reaped the full benefit, and no separation in any form would have ensued." The same distinguished writer admits, that Mr. Wesley hoped that the members of the Church and its clergy would have been led by the growth of religious feeling to view his societies with more cordiality; and, accordingly, voluntarily adopted certain rules as to his lay preachers not being permitted to administer sacraments, as to his followers not meeting during the hours of church service, and as to their being exhorted to attend at their parish churches, and, above all, to receive the sacraments within those walls, in order to show more distinctly that he was no dissenter, no separatist.

*Biographer.* One of the strongest recorded facts against the opinion you maintain respecting Mr. Wesley, is, I think, his introduction of *lay agency* into the spiritual affairs of his societies, thus committing a manifest violation of Church order and discipline.

*Vicar.* I think so too, and yet Mr. Wesley had no intention in so doing to separate from the Establishment. He looked on the lay preachers not as pastors, but as evangelists or teachers, and received them as such. In like

manner, when he proceeded to ordain preachers, though he did so from the erroneous conviction that in the primitive church bishops and presbyters were essentially of one order, and therefore that he had the right so to ordain them, yet it was not from a feeling of opposition to, or disrespect for the Church, that he so acted. And that this was his feeling is demonstrated by his own statement, on occasion of the ordination of Dr. Coke to proceed to America. He said, "For many years I have been importuned from time to time to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace's sake, but because I was determined as little as possible to violate the established order of the National Church to which I belonged." As to his opinion of that Church, he declared it to be "the best constituted National Church in the world." It is true that, in 1790, he claimed the full exercise of the power of Presbyterian ordination for the whole of England, but this was not until half a century had elapsed from his first employing lay preachers.

*Biographer.* The grand climacterical year of Methodism, 1784, when he assumed the power of ordination, and executed that famous Deed

of Declaration which established a legal definition of the term "Conference," must then, I suppose, be regarded as the year when Mr. Wesley separated from the Church?

*Vicar.* I am not prepared, Sir, to say that he separated from the Church even then. He acted most irregularly as a Churchman, but most wisely as the founder of a religious body. He had seen, as well as read, the living and the past history of dissenters. He had known many a Trinitarian meeting-house become an Unitarian or Arian conventicle, and he was obliged either to give up his work altogether, abandoning his new societies, to place them under episcopal control, or to adopt the course which he pursued. As to abandoning societies of converted though irregular Churchmen, he would not have been authorized so to act; as to placing them under episcopal control, unfortunately the superior clergy would not authorize such a measure; and the course he pursued was his only alternative. Yet it ought not to be forgotten that he continued by his deed the principle of itinerancy, thus setting no preacher up in opposition to the permanent and authorized clergy of the parish, and also that up to the period of his death he

prevented the sacrament from being administered by any preachers who had not been episcopally ordained. John Wesley loved the Church, died in her faith and bosom, hoped to purify and sanctify, but not to separate from her, and was only led on by his spiritual success to the establishment of societies which he had never intended to be other than spiritual auxiliaries or fraternities, to the Church itself. Nor can any thing be clearer than this, if we attend to his own declaration as early as 1744. In answer to an inquiry whether he did not entail a schism on the Church? *i. e.* whether it was not probable that his hearers after his death would be scattered into all sects and parties, or that they would form themselves into a distinct body, he said, “ 1st. We are persuaded the body of our hearers will, even after our death, remain in the Church, unless they be thrust out. 2nd. We believe, notwithstanding, either that they will be thrust out, or that they will leaven the whole Church. 3rd. We do and will do all we can to prevent those consequences which are supposed likely to happen after our death.”

*Biographer.* In spite, however, of all he did then, and subsequently, to prevent “ those

consequences" after his death, the Conference gradually assumed to itself almost all the functions of a Christian church.

*Vicar.* Very true; and indeed during the lifetime of Mr. Wesley, it required all the weight of his name, and authority to prevent an open rupture on the question of the administration of the sacrament. Still, though the people in the country, who hardly ever received the sacrament from the hands of John Wesley, or his episcopally ordained preachers, were by no means influenced by dissenting motives; for wherever there were what they styled "*pious clergymen*," they communicated at the Established Church, though they attended the preaching of Mr. Wesley's travelling and other teachers. And after the death of Mr. Wesley, to the honour of the Conference be it recorded, it acceded with great reluctance, and only by very slow and carefully postponed measures, to the granting permission to the travelling preachers generally to administer the holy communion to the members of society. The Church prayers, the Church forms of administering the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and of Baptism, were also closely adhered to; and although many, very many inno-

vations have since crept in, they have been rather the work of time than the result of authority.

*Biographer.* Yet the “*plan of pacification*” of 1795, though calculated to heal the breaches which were then rapidly making in the Wesleyan body, was, after all, a *final* act of separation between the Church of England and Wesleyan Methodism.

*Vicar.* Not *final*, I hope, Sir, and I may add believe, as well as hope. As the intemperate attacks made on the Wesleyans in former days from church pulpits, and their being regarded as intruders at the Lord’s table, rather than as welcome communicants, are stated to be the true causes which led to the *partial* separation of the Wesleyan societies from the communion of the Church, after the death of Mr. Wesley: I cannot but believe, as well as hope, that a long continuance of the present state of feeling and conduct on the part of the clergy and hierarchy of our Church towards that body, together with some other measures, may eventually lead, if not to the positive and formal union of the Wesleyans with the Church, at least, to a more effective co-operation on the part of those bodies. That the Wesleyan Methodists were *not* dissenters in the time of their founder

was demonstrated by the fact, that when required by certain clergy and magistrates to declare that they *were dissenters*, before they could obtain *licenses* for their places of worship, they refused so to do, and even submitted in some instances to fines, rather than make such declarations. The Conventicle Act was unwisely put in execution against them. At that moment Mr. Wesley declared, “The Methodists, in general, are members of the Church of England. They hold all her doctrines, attend her services, and partake of her sacraments.” Nor since the death of their founder have they become dissenters. They conform less than they did, but they advocate the cause of National Establishments; respect, honour, and love the Church of England; and never join, *as a body*, in any dissenting efforts to overthrow her bulwarks, insult her clergy, rob her revenues, or degrade her altar. With Mr. Wesley, they deprecate the formation of distinct sects, and say with him, “It cannot be denied that there have been several revivals of religion in England since the Reformation, but the generality of the English nation were not profited thereby; because they that were the subjects of those revivals, preachers as well as people, soon separated

from the Established Church, and formed themselves into a distinct sect. So did the Presbyterians first, afterwards the Independents, the Anabaptists, and the Quakers. And after this was done, they did scarce any good, except to their own little body. As they chose to separate from the Church, so the people remaining therein separated from them, and generally contracted a prejudice against them. But these were immensely the greatest numbers; so that, by that unhappy separation, the hope of a general national reformation was totally cut off." Mr. Wesley earnestly requested his preachers to exhort all the people to keep close to the Church and sacrament, to warn them against all niceness in hearing sermons, and to warn them also against despising the prayers of the Church; and he cautioned his followers against considering their own service as a substitute for the service of the Establishment. He said, "If the people put our service in the room of the Church service, we hurt them who stay with us, and ruin them that leave us." He exhorted his hearers on one occasion to be "*Church of England men still*:" and in his directions to the assistant preachers, he said, "Exhort all that were brought up in the Church to continue



therein. Set the example yourselves, and immediately change every plan that would hinder their being at church, at least, two Sundays in four. Carefully avoid whatever has a tendency to separate men from the Church; and let all the servants in our preaching-houses go to church once on Sunday, at least." His example corresponded with his exhortations, for often did he refuse to preach during the hours of Church service, and whenever he heard of any of his preachers transgressing in that respect, he reproved them. Nor should we forget that, after more than half a century of indefatigable labours, when he met the Conference at Bristol, in July, 1786, he has recorded that eighty preachers were present, and that all determined to continue in the Church of England, without one dissentient voice; and, on a subsequent occasion, when certain persecutions, to which the preachers had been exposed, had roused in the breasts of some, a desire to separate from the Church, he put an end to this incipient schism, by declaring, "If you are resolved, you may have your service in church hours; but remember, from that time, you will see my face no more." In 1789, this feeling was strongly entertained in Ireland, where the

preachers were unanimous for not leaving the Church. In February, 1787, Mr. Wesley wrote, "By all means go to church as often as you can, and exhort all the Methodists so to do; they that are enemies to the Church are enemies to me. I am a friend to it, and ever was." In another letter he said, "I will rather lose twenty societies than separate from the Church;" and, in an article, drawn up by himself, in 1789, he said, "I never had any design of separating from the Church; I have no such design now; I do not believe that the Methodists, in general, design it, when I am no more seen. I declare, once more, that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it."

*Biographer.* Nothing can be clearer, after the evidence you have adduced, that John Wesley was an Episcopalian, a member of the Church of England, and desired, heart and soul, that his followers should remain connected with it; but have his followers trodden in his footsteps?

*Vicar.* I think not. They are *not* dissenters—they are *not* enemies—but they are, at least, demi-separatists. The plan of pacification destroyed their Church of England character. The

heads of the body have acted reluctantly and slowly, and endeavoured, whilst Dr. Coke, Mr. Benson, Dr. Adam Clarke, and some others were living, to resist the various demands for organic changes, till, at length, not only the restriction of the hours of preaching to those which did not interfere with the service of the Church has been removed, and all hours are now alike; not only is the sacrament administered by all travelling preachers; not only is a general attendance on the services of the Church not inculcated as part of Wesleyan discipline, but even casual attendance is *not* enjoined or recommended; and Mr. Wesley, if he rose from his tomb, would now have to reprove the half-separatist Methodists, and would ask, Where are the Church Methodists I created and raised?

*Biographer.* How then can you think that, within any moderate length of time, a union can be brought about between the Church and Methodism?

*Vicar.* I admit, Sir, there are many difficulties; but yet I cannot regard them as insurmountable. There is no very important difference in matters of doctrine: it would be easy to create a Wesleyan bishop; he might be

named by the Wesleyan Conference, with a *veto* in the Archbishop of Canterbury. Episcopal ordination would thus be conferred on the Methodist body. In rural and thinly-peopled districts the hours of Wesleyan service might be restricted to those during which the Church services are not held; the Liturgy should be used in every chapel, and the members of the Wesleyan Society required to communicate at least four times a-year in the parochial church. Such an *union* as this is not only possible, but feasible. It may take a long time to bring about, and it may be necessary to connect with it other important adjuncts; but such an union is not impossible, and would be productive of immense advantages both to the Church and her allies, as well as sound the death knell to all hopes of subversion still entertained by the united dissenters. Mr. Samuel Bradburn, Sir, had another plan which he promulgated in the year 1793, but which met with but little support at that time from the Wesleyan body. His notion was, that if the king and the bishops were willing, a given number of the preachers (suppose all who had travelled seven years with a fair character) might be ordained, and all their chapels made

tributary to the bishops ; and that without the least injury, to either the Church, or the Methodist plan. For, said he, the conditions of ordination might be such as would preclude the preachers from intruding upon the State clergy ; and the terms upon which the chapels should become tributary, might be such as would preserve them from ever being put to any other use than was originally intended. His plan was the following :—

1. Let no preacher be ordained but those recommended by the Conference, and let that recommendation be deemed sufficient.

2. Let no preacher, ordained on this plan, be permitted to officiate in any of the churches without a special licence from a bishop for that purpose : and if any preacher be so licensed, let him be put out of the Methodist connection ; and let no regular clergyman officiate in any of our chapels.

3. Let none of the preachers perform the rite of marriage in England or Ireland ; but let those who are ordained, bury the dead, baptize, and administer the Lord's Supper, provided they never receive any money for doing any thing of this kind ; but that all the dues be regularly paid to the parochial ministers.

4. Let the service of the Church, as by law established, be regularly used in all our chapels, where service is in church-hours ; the ordained preachers

only to wear the dress of the clergy, and administer the ordinances.

5. Let the Methodist plan remain entire, as it respects itinerancy, circuits, districts, Conferences, and every kind of meeting, and the whole of our discipline as at present.

6. Let the preachers be so far subject to the Episcopal jurisdiction, that any of the bishops may be present at our Conferences, while the probationers' and the preachers' characters are examined; and let any such bishop propose any question, relating to our doctrine or discipline, that he may wish to have cleared up; and if he have any charge against a preacher, let him bring it forward when that preacher's character is examining, the same as any preacher does. And let every preacher that is excluded from the connection, be also legally debarred from exercising his office as an ordained minister.

7. Let all the chapels in the connection be registered in the bishops' books; and let each chapel pay to the bishop of the diocese in which it stands five shillings a-year for every hundred pounds which it cost, as a compensation for his trouble.

“Such,” he added, “are the rough outlines of a scheme, that, if adopted, might bring half a million of people into the strictest union with the Church. And if something of this kind be not done, will not those be to blame who oppose it?—I am not one of those.”

“ This plan of Mr. Bradburn’s,” continued the vicar, “ might still be put into operation, or at least with but few modifications, provided the Conference would consent to such arrangement. *How* and by *whom* it could be proposed, I know not, as it would be first requisite to ascertain the views of the preachers generally. But as the most enlightened men amongst the Wesleyans profess their *sincere attachment* to the Church of England, and as our own clergy feel that a longer separation of the Wesleyans from the Church would be a great evil, which it is our duty to prevent, I do hope that some measures will be taken towards effecting such, an union as all good men, *most* desire to promote. The Methodists cannot get back to their *old* plan. Their *new* plan is against the will of their founder. They are not in heart dissenters or even Presbyterians; and a *bonâ fide* alliance with the Church is the only cure for all evils.”

*Biographer.* But what would you do with the present race of unepiscopally ordained Methodist preachers?

*Vicar.* Treat them as if they had been ordained, and allow them the same privileges, simply taking care that, as they died off or re-

tired, their successors should all be ordained episcopally.

*Biographer.* And what would you do with the class meetings and other essential parts of Methodism?

*Vicar.* Leave them untouched. They are not anti-episcopal and are wholly *spiritual*.

*Biographer.* But, then, what would you do as to the Calvinistic question?

*Vicar.* Leave that untouched too. As well might we propose to exclude from the Church all such of our clergy as are not Calvinistic in our acceptation of the term, as to exclude the Wesleyan preachers from the benefits of episcopal ordination and Church of England fellowship, because their views are what we denominate Arminian.

*Biographer.* But what is the present attitude of the Wesleyan Methodists, as well towards the State as towards the Church of England? And is that attitude in harmony with your wishes, not to say anticipations of union?\*

*Vicar.* It would be well, Sir, both for our

\* It would be an act of injustice did we not acknowledge our obligations to the Rev. Richard Hodgson, M.A., Evening Lecturer of St. Peter's, Cornhill, for the very valuable matter supplied in his pamphlet, entitled "Wesleyan Methodism considered in relation to the Church." London: Hatchard, 1841. Price 1s. 6d.



Church and for the cause of religion generally in this country, if the attitude of the Wesleyan Methodists was better understood, and if their real views and institutions were more generally known. With reference to the State, they do not resemble the dissenters, who are in perpetual hostility towards venerable and long-tried political institutions; and the Wesleyans avoid the two extremes of indifference to political movements, on the one hand, and of absorption in such matters, on the other. Whilst they heartily adopt the maxim and the truth, "*that the powers that be are ordained of God,*" they, at the same time, do not separate human governments from providential control and national punishments; and whilst they trace the source of authority to God, they are left free to escape from an approval of the *abuse* of this principle, by recognising a controlling and remedial power, direct or indirect, in the interfering agency of God with the affairs of men as seen in a *national* capacity, causing their own mischoice, or its opposite, to inflict suffering, or to promote the well-being of the body politic. It is a very common thing, Sir, for the dissenters to call the Wesleyans, Tories, and to make use of that word as a term of reproach. I have

often observed in a country town, when the dissenters were getting up petitions against tithes, church-rates, the House of Lords and its clerical members, or on any other sectarian topic, they would, as much as possible, steer clear of the Wesleyans. The Wesleyan ministers would not be invited to attend the meeting, or to sign petitions, lest they should introduce some qualified words, or propose some alterations, at variance with the high state of excitement and tumultuous feelings of the mooters of the measure. The Conservatism of the Wesleyans is always a source of annoyance to political dissenters. The heads of the Wesleyan body admit that the British constitution has produced for the nation, as a whole, as much of happiness as mere policy and human legislation could possibly secure; and they likewise allow, and that with frankness, and without being required to do so, that there is as great an amount of religious freedom in England, guaranteed to all sects, as is consistent with the existence of an Established Church, of which they are almost uniformly both friends and advocates. They cling to time-honoured institutions, usages, and objects, as the poet lingers near the site of splendid ruins, catching inspiration from

the images and mementoes of by-gone days. They believe that the very antiquity of 'established institutions has a plastic influence in forming the heart of the nation to its strength, and fulness of action and power. They know and feel that England is not what she is, from one cause alone; but that her character is greatly constituted by the influence of antiquity. This influence of antiquity shows itself in rules of politeness, ceremonies, formalities, solemnities. It is the result of the rites attendant on law and religion, the oath of office, the venerable assembly, the judges' procession and trumpet, the disgrace and punishment attendant on crime; of public prayer, of the Bible, "of the consecration of churches; of the sacred festival, the cathedral's gloom and choir, the burial of the dead, the observance of the Sabbath, the sacraments, the preaching of the Gospel, faith in the atonement, the patience of the saints, and, above all, of the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost. Connected with this respect for antiquity; there is that freedom from restlessness and interestedness, so common to all classes of dissenters. The Wesleyans have no objection to an Established Church, no objection to be considered as under obligation to that

Church for the great amount of religious instruction supplied every week to the whole nation, and do not pant, as dissenters do, and ever have done, after eminence, rule, and authority. Their patriotism has not a personal or a selfish bearing. They rejoice in the beneficial influence of existing institutions upon the mass; and though very often much wealthier than their dissenting neighbours, are rarely seen as contesting candidates for civic or even rural distinctions. It is not that they are not patriotic, as the dissenters would represent them, but that they are *unselfish*. They are not lovers of innovation for the pleasure of creating excitement and agitation. They are essentially conservative of all that is good, and are even anxious to retain the rites of the law and of religion, the cathedral's gloom, and the sanctity of the less splendid sanctuary, as the house of devotion, with all the due solemnities connected therewith, as necessary to excite just veneration and reverence for what was thus calculated to produce a respect for antiquity and a confidence in the wisdom of ages.

*Biographer.* How then does it happen that the Wesleyans, who avow their attachment to the Church, pray for its prosperity and extension,

and will not join the dissenters in their ruthless attempts to deprive it of its revenues and its connection with the State, do not instantly enter its bosom, closely attach themselves to it, and educate their children under its forms and services?

*Vicar.* Your question, Sir, is a very natural one; and to those who have not attentively watched for upwards of sixty years, as I have done, the conduct of the Wesleyan chiefs and people in this country, it would doubtless appear an enigma. The dissenters, at first sight, would seem to a novice in such matters to be more consistent and honest men. They profess to disapprove of an Established Church, and therefore they seek to destroy it. They object to the connection of the Church with the State, and therefore they seek their disjunction. They declare that they believe the discipline and worship of the Church of England to be unscriptural, and therefore they never frequent the services of the Church so disapproved; whilst the Wesleyans profess to love and revere the Church, and yet absent themselves from the services of the Establishment, laud the Church clergy as a body, and yet support ministers of their own persuasion

wholly separated from the hierarchy of the Church so approved; and train up their families, not to support the Church by their personal aid and personal attendance at the sacraments and public services of Episcopacy, but to patronize a system and order of things now distinct from the Church, and without the pale of its direct and positive influence. Thus the Wesleyans are often set down as hypocrites. But if we examine more closely the conduct of this body of Christians, we shall find that they are not liable to the charge. They believe that Episcopacy is much better than Independency, but that Wesleyanism is preferable to either. This is the secret of their attitude and of their conduct. They believe that the Episcopal Church of this country has effected much good; that to disturb it would be a vast evil; that those who are its enemies are not prepared with any substitute for it, should they succeed in overthrowing it; that much more good can be accomplished by its instrumentality than can ever be effected by the voluntary system; and that though they would prefer seeing the Wesleyan system universally adopted, as being more *spiritual* in its individual operation, yet that as such a state of

things cannot be brought about without some special intervention of God, they discountenance all plans which have for their object to weaken or destroy a Church which, though they do not regard as perfect, is yet, in their opinion, the means of carrying the Gospel from one extremity of the land to the other. The conduct of the dissenters is the opposite to this. Though they are not prepared with any system of universal religious instruction disconnected from the State, yet they oppose the system which exists, and which is connected with it. Though unable to carry the voluntary principle into operation in parts of the country where the population is scattered or poor, they would yet deprive those portions of the land of the religion of the State, which is their only certain means of obtaining regular religious teaching. The dissenters seek for power, office, patronage; the Wesleyans seek for neither. The dissenters are then the hypocrites (I speak of them as a body), and not the Wesleyans. The dissenters affect to be opposed to the Church of England because the Church is connected with the State; and yet if the dissenters could attain power and office, they would support Independency, or some other

system as opposed to Episcopacy. Whilst the dissenters would begin by destroying, the Wesleyans begin by supporting old institutions and a long-tried friend. Whilst the Wesleyans say, both by their conduct and their language, "Though the Church of England is not all we could desire, yet she is as free from imperfections as all State religions possibly can be, and therefore we will defend her;" the dissenters say, "The Church of England is connected with the State, is therefore irksome to us, is in a condition of superiority, hurts and wounds us by that superiority, and will always render us dissatisfied, until we shall be placed at last on a level with her." The Wesleyans have none of this feeling. They have no secret or ulterior, no hidden or undeclared, objects in view. They do not wish for power; do not disapprove the Church possessing it; and they are satisfied with being looked on as inferior in importance, provided they are allowed to continue to exercise their spiritual influence.

*Biographer.* This is a new and interesting light in which to regard the Wesleyans; and certainly their conduct can be no longer enigmatical to those who thus appreciate them.

*Vicar.* In fact, they resemble the Noncon-



formists of 1673, who, though they declared they could not conscientiously enter the Church without certain proposed alterations being made in some of its institutions, nevertheless, having a full conviction of its being beneficial as a whole to the nation, did, when they saw it likely to be injured by the deceptive measures of Charles II., readily acquiesce in the passing of the Corporation and Test Act, though it would cut them off from all possible participation in the offices, honours, and emoluments of the State, that by this self-devotion they might contribute to the support of a Church which they deemed, though defective in some points, yet promotive of the religious well-being of the people. I know that the conduct of the Nonconformists of those days is viewed as cowardly and pusillanimous by the violent dissenters of the present epoch, but all wise and good men will not hesitate to admit, that they acted with prudence, disinterestedness, and piety.

*Biographer.* It is still surprising that the mass of Wesleyan members should thus act and feel. I can perfectly understand that even thousands should so reason; but the very general character of these sentiments in the

body is likely to excite astonishment on the part of bystanders.

*Vicar.* I think that surprise will be removed, if you consider the character of the Wesleyan societies, the degree of perfection to which their system of fellowship has arrived, their class and band-meeting plans, and, above all, the influence of the ministers having similar views and feelings over the people entrusted to their charge, and who are morally moulded by them. The ministers have been reproached with ignorance by some, and jeered at for their cowardice by others; but both these charges are incorrect and improper. The Wesleyan ministers are fully equal in talent and acquirements to the dissenters—whilst their inferiority to the clergy in education and attainments they frankly and fully admit. Hence their sons often become clergymen, and this neither excites their surprise nor their anger. They hope that those sons will take into the Church new portions of the leaven of sanctified views and eminent Christian piety, and they see with satisfaction what to *them* at least appears to be a spiritual improvement in the clergy of the Establishment. The most able

writers of the Wesleyan body have often alluded to this subject. They have been well aware of the superior influence an Established Church must always exert over the mass of the people, and instead of seeking to weaken or to destroy that influence, they have uniformly expressed a hope that it would become increasingly moral, social, and religious.' At the same time, I think the Wesleyans are not yet prepared to make those concessions which would be necessary to lead to the union of the Church with their body. All this must be the work of time. The secession of the Kilhamites, the disputes as to the administration of the sacrament, the plan of pacification, and, finally, the Warren schism, have all been severe lessons to the Wesleyan body. If Warren had succeeded in his object, the unity of Methodism, and therefore its strength, would have been destroyed. Those lessons have not been lost upon such men as Dr. Bunting, Dr. Alder, Mr. Beecham, and Mr. Jackson; and although the period has perhaps not yet come when some attempt at a union may be made, yet rely on it, Sir, that the more enlightened and directing portion of the Wesleyan preachers feel that the departures made from Mr. Wes-

ley's wishes and intentions after his death have not added to the stability of Wesleyan institutions. No subject is more worthy *their* attention on the one hand; and the hierarchy of our Church will do well to learn from the wisdom of Rome, and to make provision for engirthing by degrees within her communion those of her sons, whom now we call Wesleyans—but who after all would be more correctly styled irregular Churchmen.

*Biographer.* I thank you most cordially, my dear Sir, for the information as well as pleasure you have communicated, and shall hereafter watch with even increased attention and interest the proceedings of the Wesleyan body.\*

The Vicar had now reached the much-loved elms of his cheerful parsonage, happy at having afforded pleasure and instruction to his friend, but fatigued with a protracted walk and exciting conversation.

\* The Biographer of the Vicar of the Malvern Hills acknowledges with pleasure and gratitude how much he is indebted in the performance of his task to the author of a most valuable and interesting book, "A Memento of the intellectual Character and amiable Nature of the late Rev. David M'Nicoll, Minister of the Wesleyan Church, Glasgow." 1811.—M'Phun, 1 vol. 18mo. 232 pages.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC EDUCATION OF THE VICAR—THE FIRST TUTOR—CATHEDRAL WORSHIP—HYMNS OF THE BREVIARY—PURITANICAL NAMES—CHURCH EARLY HISTORY—DEFENCE OF NATIONAL RELIGIONS—REMOVAL OF JAMES HERBERT TO CAMBRIDGE—A TRUE ANGLICAN CHURCHMAN—SWEDENBORG AND HIS SYSTEM—CHURCH MUSIC—COLLEGE LIFE—PREPARATIONS FOR ORDINATION.

THE Rev. Mr. Armstrong, to whom was confided the education of James Herbert, was an Oxford scholar and divine. Having a large head, immense eyebrows, small eyes, pale face, and black bushy hair, his aspect was at first sight rather forbidding; but his manners were bland, his kind-heartedness excited confidence, and whilst his pupils feared his displeasure, they did not the less confide in and love him. Devotedly attached to the Establishment, of which he was only a minor canon, he officiated, for £19 per annum, in that venerable cathedral, which a few years afterwards was deprived of

much of its ancient and commanding character by the fall of its west front, which, though rebuilt, was not reconstructed with sufficient regard to that consistency of architecture, which its original design unquestionably merited. Endowed with a fine tenor voice, which he had cultivated from a love of music and an attachment to the cathedral service, Hereford could not then boast of any equal as a tenor chaunter to the preceptor of young Herbert. The ancient hymns from the Roman Breviary were also familiar to his mind, from “*Primo die quo Trinitas*” \* to “*Jam sol recedit igneus ;*” † and the beautiful hymn, “*Consors paterni luminis,*” was sung, except on Saints’ days, by his pupils every morning.

“ Consort of paternal light,  
Light of light, essential day,  
Bidding farewell to the night,  
Lo ! to Thee we sing and pray.

“ Chase the darkness from the mind,  
Chase the powers of night afar ;  
Let not sleep our senses bind,  
Nor the sluggish spirit mar.

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\* “ On the first day, when heaven and earth.”

† “ Now sinks in night the flaming sun.”

“ Christ, behold with kind regard,  
 What to Thee in faith we bear ;  
 Let the morning hymn be heard,  
 Herald to the morning prayer.

“ Prayer and hymn receive, addrest  
 To thy Father and to Thee,  
 And thy Holy Spirit blest,  
 Reigning to eternity.”

Mr. Armstrong was no friend to the then commencing encroachments on Church psalmody. One of his most formidable objections to Mr. Wesley, to Whitefield, and to their partisans, was, the attempt they then made to substitute their own modern hymns, for the old and venerable psalms of the sweet Singer of Israel. “Our excellent Reformers,” he would say, “studious of goodness rather than of novelty, constructed their provisions for the public worship of the Church upon the foundation of previously existing forms. Thus, our Common Prayer-book has derived a large portion of its contents from the Breviary of the Romish Church, but purified from all its corruptions, whilst that discarded is unsound and corrupt throughout; but the ‘*Veni Creator Spiritus*’ has been adopted by our Church in her ‘Ordering of Priests,’ and consecration of bishops.” Thus, sacred, and above all, Church music, formed

the amusement of his leisure hours; and he generally succeeded, by the sweetness of his voice and his own enthusiasm, to beget in his pupils a love for Church melody. “Good Bishop Ken,” he would tell them, “used to sing daily to his lute his morning and evening hymns, which partook much of the character of the hymns from the Roman Breviary. As a Winchester College boy, Ken must have been from early years familiar with one of those compositions, *viz.* that which begins *Jam lucis orto sidere*.

“ ‘ Brightly shines the morning star :  
 Pray our God his grace to give,  
 That from sin and danger far,  
 We the coming day may live.’

“That beautiful hymn, my boys,” continued Mr. Armstrong, “is still sung there, and has been transmitted from the time of the foundation of the college in the fourteenth century. To this practice it is not improbable that we may be indebted for Bishop Ken’s own beautiful and well-known hymns. Poetry, young gentlemen, associated with music in the expression of devotional sentiment, is once and again recommended to Christians by St. Paul, under the threefold distribution of ‘psalms, hymns, and



spiritual songs ;' we have them all in our Church services. There is an unpublished version of *Merrick*, the poetical translator of the Psalms, of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, which is passing beautiful. Such stanzas as these are to be found in it :

“ ‘ But who hath listened, who believed our word,  
And seen the arm of heaven's approaching Lord  
Lo, as a sickly plant he lifts the head,  
A root scarce heaving from its thirsty bed.

“ ‘ No grace attends him, our desire to move,  
No beauty to bespeak our earthly love :  
A child of grief, an intimate of woe,  
A man by men rejected, mean and low.

“ ‘ Our eyes indignant from his face we turned,  
His worth neglected, and his weakness scorned ;  
Yet ours the burden was, that weighed him down,  
And whelmed him with afflictions not his own.’ ”

Mr. Armstrong, though a great lover of classic literature, and devoted to his Greek and Latin classes, was a poet as well as a musician. The ordinary events and incidents of nature and of life, he viewed through a poet's prism ; and the rainbow, the redbreast, the old shepherd, the blushing maiden, the lamb, the dove, the violet, the starry heavens, and the moon's pale light, were those of his compositions most

admired by his young auditors. Virtue, sense, and piety marked his cheerful, as his severer hours, and his lays were such as he would look back to with satisfaction, when even the grasshopper should become a burden. He laid up in manhood's prime a store for wintry age. "As oft as I hear the robin-redbreast chirp as cheerfully in September, at the beginning of its winter, as in March, at the approach of its summer, why should not we, say I, give as cheerful entertainment to the hoary, frosty hairs of our age's winter, as to the primroses of our youth's spring? Why not to the declining sun of adversity as (like Persians) to the rising sun of prosperity? I am sent to the dove to learn innocency, and why not to the redbreast to learn equanimity and patience?"

This was the character of Mr. Armstrong's lighter instructions. He had read much, laid up plenteous stores in a well-exercised and retentive memory, and could draw forth from his treasury old and new things suitable to the genius of his pupils and to their varied characters. Though his classes for Greek and Latin were necessarily similar and monotonous, in every other part of instruction he was varied almost to playfulness. He did not, however, adopt

one system. "Some flowers," he said, "require more of the gardener's care than others; they are brought from countries afar off, from brighter skies and more genial soils, and require all his vigilance and tenderness, lest they be blighted by our colder winds, or starved by our ungenerous ground;" and then, patting on the head some meek, humble, quiet little fellow, who appeared to require encouragement rather than discipline, would add, "The heath on which you flourished, my little plant, must have had a southern aspect; well, we will not freeze you even in Hereford." When he saw a timid lad striving hard, but with humble, downcast eye, he would say, "Humility, my boys, is the expression of more graces than one; it resembles that original *white* in the natural world, which includes in its composition the other colours, and is itself the purest of them all."

With such a preceptor, few boys remained cold, blunt, or stupid. They generally affectionized him much, and James Herbert was one of that number. He received his first decided prepossessions for that Church of which he was afterwards, for more than sixty years, a warm and devoted member, from the conversations

he had with his reverend and revered instructor, and at a much earlier age than is usually the case could defend his Church from the attacks of real or imagined opponents.

“Though occasionally it may have happened,” said Mr. Armstrong to his young pupil, “that some of the unworthy sons of the Church of England have sought the priest’s office for a morsel of bread, and by their unsound doctrine, want of zeal, or unholy lives, have scattered the sheep of their fold instead of gathering them to his bosom, yet none have been so severe towards such traitors as our Church itself, who hath said, in the Ordination Service, ‘Have always, therefore, printed in your remembrance how great a treasure is committed to your charge; for they are the sheep of Christ, which He bought with his death, and for whom He shed his blood. The Church and congregation whom you must serve is his spouse and his body, and if it shall happen, the same Church, or any member thereof, to take any hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault, and also the horrible punishment that will ensue.’” At the same time, he never ceased to remind his pupils that the institutions of the

Church of England are of Divine authority ; and he insisted that whatever, therefore, tended to confirm, in the people of this kingdom, an attachment to our apostolical Church and to her ordinances, proportionally tended to promote God's honour and man's salvation ; and the dying ejaculation of Archbishop Whitgift was one he often repeated in their hearing, "*For the Church of God ! For the Church of God !*"

In the paternal, but clerical residence of Mr. Armstrong, were three or four sons of descendants of the Puritans. Two generations had not yet removed them from the influence of their traditions, and one was named "*Make-ready* Hawkins ;" a second, "*Penitence* Albrook," and a third, "*Beloved* Wright." The practice had not yet become extinct in their families, which was so common during the period of the civil wars, of baptizing their children, not by a Christian name, but by some word or phrase of a biblical character. Thus, there was a Sussex jury composed of "*good men and true*," whose Christian and family names and titles were as follows :—

<i>Accepted</i> Trevor, of Norsham.	<i>Be-faithful</i> Joiner, of Bret-
<i>Redeemed</i> Compton, of Battle.	ling.
<i>Faint-not</i> Hewet, of Heath-	<i>Fly-debate</i> Robert, of Bret-
field.	ling.
<i>Make Peace</i> Heaton, of Hare.	<i>Fight-the-good-fight-of-faith</i>
<i>God Reward</i> Smart, of Five-	White, of Emer.
hurst.	<i>More-fruit</i> Fowler, of East
<i>Stand-fast-on-high</i> Stringer,	Hadley.
of Crowhurst.	<i>Hope-for</i> Bending, of East
<i>Earth</i> Adams, of Warbleton.	Hadley.
<i>Called</i> Lower, of Warbleton.	<i>Gracefull</i> Harding, of Lewes.
<i>Kill Sin</i> Pimple, of Witham.	<i>Weep-not</i> Billings, of Lewes.
<i>Return</i> Spelman, of Watling.	<i>Meek</i> Brewer, of Okeham.

“*Make-ready*,” “*Penitence*,” and “*Beloved*,” were three of the younger boys in the residence of Mr. Armstrong at the time James Herbert entered as pupil; and the singularity of their names attracted his attention and very often his smiles. Mr. Armstrong was too kind-hearted, a man, though he was no Puritan lover or defender, to allow the singularity of their names to be made a jest of by their schoolfellows, so he called one “*Make*,” and the other “*Pen*,” and the third “*Bell*.”

At the same time, he pointed out the excesses of Puritanism, and the civil and religious evils to which those excesses had given rise; and in his lectures on ecclesiastical history, defended the institutions of the

Church of England, as well as gloried in her history.

“ Our Church, my lads,” he would say, “ was introduced by one of the apostles not long after our Lord’s ascension, and the foundation of that ecclesiastical fabric was then laid which we now call the Church of England. In vain did Diocletian burn their churches ; in vain were the first monuments of our country or its writings destroyed by the fire of enemies, or carried off by banished Christians to future obscurity and destruction. In vain did Maximilian seek to root out our Church from Britain, or to exterminate its adherents by martyrdom ; for Constantius succeeded to the Roman purple, and persecution was stopped in his western provinces. Endowed with a vital principle of faith and truth, the Christian founders of our Church soon rallied ; sprang as it were from the graves of their martyred parents, and under Constantius and Constantine the Christians so multiplied, that at last the island abounded with churches. This was so true, that even in the commencement of the third century three British bishops were present at the council of Arles ; and others assisted only a few years afterwards at that at Nice, at which that creed

was drawn up (325 A.D.), which has been justly considered as one of the main bulwarks in defence of the doctrine of the equality of the Father and the Son. These Christian bishops were no dissenters, no Puritans, no Presbyterians. The Church of England has steered equally clear of the aspiring despotism of Popery, and of the levelling republicanism of dissent, and is alike in its constitution, discipline, doctrines, and worship, the model of churches. When the Saxons drove into the mountains, the fastnesses, and to the stern poverty of Wales, the sad remains of the ancient Britons, still they retained their pure faith and pious worship, till at last their former persecutors became converted to Christianity. The past sorrows of our Episcopalian ancestors were soon forgotten, the Church was re-established in its ancient glory, and Canterbury, the mother of us all, was beautified and adorned by the pious Bertha. Ireland, afterwards the *Country of the Saints*, was converted by means of Palladius, and subsequently by St. Patrick, and the supremacy of Rome was wholly unknown to the ancient Irish! Alas! that same Ireland had afterwards introduced to it from England, by order of Pope Adrian, the Romish



heresy ! Yet till the close of the 6th century Britain had been preserved pure, and the Scots clergy kept their religion untainted with Popish corruption until even the twelfth. Never forget, my boys, that it was not to the court of Rome, or to the Pope, that any part of these realms were indebted for the introduction of the Christian religion. It was not that Church of England that separated or dissented from the Church of Rome, at the epoch of the glorious Reformation. No, the old Church of England was the Catholic Episcopal Church of the apostles; and the dissenters from that Church were the Papists. True, indeed, Popish doctrines, foreign influence, and a corrupt creed were subsequently introduced, but the vital principle still remained ; and at last WICLIFF arose to effect the important work of the Reformation. The *sufficiency of Scripture* was the grand doctrine proclaimed at that period. No more legends, no more traditions, no more commandments of the Church in opposition to, or on an equality with, those of God ; no more Peter's-pence, false miracles, holy water, useless penances, mortifying ceremonies, ruinous observances, and degrading submission, for the Reformation proclaimed the infallibility, not of a foreign eccle-

siastic or prince, but of the Word of God. To Wicliff we are indebted for his literal translation of the Bible from the Latin Vulgate. That is *his* claim to immortal honour and undying fame. The Latin version became gradually exploded; and though the Reformation was not perfected till upwards of 180 years afterwards, yet in the reign of Henry VIII., the Papal yoke was finally shaken off, whilst in the meantime thousands of pious men died in the acknowledgment and profession of the original truths of the old Catholic (not Roman) Church in England. The pious and venerable Cranmer was one of the glories of our Church at this epoch; but these reformers, in whom we triumph, were not, as dissenters and Papists state, the *founders*, but only the purifiers of the Church; never forget, my lads, that our Church of England was the very same Church before the Reformation as she was after, and as she is now. The reformers cleared away the rubbish of Popery which was obstructing her utility, and obscuring her glory, and restored her to her pristine purity; leaving her to us, their children, a noble and rich inheritance.

“The English Josiah, as has been styled Edward VI., gave new spirit and vigour to the

Protestant cause ; the liturgical service was reformed and translated into English, the old superstitious altars which the Papists had introduced were exchanged for the communion-tables of the English Catholic Church ; the Psalms of David were translated into English metre, and articles of religion were framed similar in substance to those thirty-nine articles which all Churchmen now adopt as the rule of their Episcopalian faith. Nor, my lads, did the persecutions of Queen Mary, of fire and faggot memory, succeed in doing more than putting to death some of the great and good defenders of our holy faith. They left survivors who rallied round Elizabeth ; re-established the Reformation, withstood the attacks of the Brownists and other schismatics, as well as of the Spanish armada and the Papists, and whose sons ever afterwards resisted the dangerous predominancy given by King James to the Presbyterians, whom he weakly and unjustly placed on the footing of our Episcopal Church. In vain was the Gunpowder Plot formed against the Protestant religion. In vain for a while did the Independents succeed in driving the lords from the Upper House. In vain was nonconformity conceived in the days

of King Edward VI., born in the reign of Queen Mary, nursed and weaned in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, allowed to grow up to be a tall stripling under King James, and at last, even towards the end of King Charles's reign, to assume the full strength and stature of a man, able not only to cope with, but to conquer for a while the monarchy, its adversary. In vain did the Presbyterians get into power, dissolve the constitution, and change the monarchy into what they styled a commonwealth. In vain did Charles II. secretly favour Popery, whilst publicly he professed Episcopacy. In vain did James II. so far encourage the progress of Popery as to cause some even of the most zealous Protestants to apprehend that deliverance was impossible; for that moment of man's extremity was the one of God's opportunity, and the Prince of Orange arrived with the glorious standard, "*The Protestant religion, and the liberties of England.*" Yes; "Church and State," my lads, never forget this! but the Church of the apostles, the first founders of Christianity in England; and the State, with all the liberties and privileges secured to us by the glorious Revolution of 1688. But the enemies of our Church were

not thus easily crushed. Since then they have been seeking, by falsehoods, libels, plots, and the distribution of money, as well as by our recent civil wars, to replace the scion of Popery on our British Protestant throne, but the wisdom, power, and goodness of God have hitherto been displayed in our salvation; invasion and conspiracies have been unsuccessful; four years of confusion in Queen Anne's reign were insufficient to answer the object for which they were designed; and the disturbances in the late King's reign and in that of our present King (long may he live, and may God preserve him! King George II.) have only tended to strengthen the State, promote union in the Church—that Church which secures to you, my boys, and will secure to your children's children, religion without fanaticism, toleration without anarchy, freedom without licentiousness, and a wise, enlightened, learned, and pious hierarchy, without Latin prayers, auricular confession, a mangled Bible, and superstitious ceremonies! Let us pray, then, let us pray, for this Church of God!"

And then he would pray with all the fervour and piety of a true Christian, as well as true Churchman, for that Church beneath whose branches all good men are protected, and in

whose shade all enjoy repose, peace, and happiness.

By this mode of instruction, history was engrafted on religion, faith was called to their aid, and prayer was connected with all as the source of the Christian's strength, and the strongest portion of the Christian's armour.

Sometimes he would prepare his pupils for the objections which they would hear made to the Established Church of the country.

“ An Established Church, my boys, is a patriarchal oversight of the inhabitants of a kingdom. No ascendancy is so beautiful and so desirable as that which belongs to the parish ministers of a national and true faith. Throned in the cordialities of their people, they find unbounded welcome at every cottage-door, and, by their unwearied attentions at sicknesses, at deaths, and funerals, have implicated the very sound of their names and the ideas of their persons with the dearest interests of families.

“ This system of an Established Church and a parish priesthood covers all the land with a blessed and benignant economy, and those who wish to uproot it possess not the chastened imaginations of Christians or philosophers, but

the barbarous or gothic imaginations of unfeeling calculators, who overlook what constitutes the chief element of a nation's prosperity and a nation's greatness." Religious establishments are *expedient*, for they ensure a fuller and freer circulation of the Gospel; they are *necessary*, for men will not seek after religion, but religion must seek after them; and they are *scriptural*, for God himself established a national religion among the Jews; and kings, it is declared, shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers. The chief duty of the magistrates of a Christian people is to promote the spread of Christianity. There is nothing in the nature of religion *as such* which exempts it from the authority of the legislator. A comprehensive national religion, with toleration to those who differ from it, is the wisest and safest system which a State can adopt; for by it liberty of conscience is secured with means of instruction, the peace of society with the progress of truth, and the right of private judgment with the care of public safety. If there were no National Church, the mere spiritual church would either become, like the Papacy, a dreadful tyranny over mind and body, or else would fall abroad into a multi-

tude of enthusiastic sects, as during the last century. 'In no country, of any religion, can liberty of conscience be preserved but by means, and under the shadows, of a National Church; and a political establishment connected with it, but distinct from its *spiritual* character. Even the Nonconformists of your grandfathers' times, my boys, thought themselves bound to communicate with our Church, and looked upon separation from it to be a sin."

These are specimens of the kind of religious and Church instruction supplied to his pupils by the excellent Mr. Armstrong. No wonder that they rarely forgot them in future life, but that nearly all acknowledged that to him they were indebted for the zeal which they felt for the cause of evangelical episcopacy, whilst that zeal was based on an enlightened and accurate acquaintance with the reasons for an attachment, which grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength.

Delighted with the progress made by James Herbert, at the residence of this admirable man, his father removed him with some reluctance, at the age of eighteen, to introduce him to the public and less guarded education of a col-



age life. But the long apprenticeship he had served to hard study, serious thought, rational amusements, order, discipline, and moral and religious culture, at Hereford, had not been in vain. He knew and felt the value of that religion to administer at whose altars he was about to aspire, and few young men of his standing felt more sincerely the truths of the Christian faith, or could have defended with so much talent the Church of his fathers, from the multiplied assaults of rising sects and fierce controversialists. Cambridge was selected by his father as the University of which he was to become a member, and, in October, 1768, he entered at St. John's College. His father regretted less his removal from Hereford, because Mr. Armstrong had introduced his son to a model of a Christian and a Churchman, in the person of the Rev. Dr. Short, one of the then incumbents at the town of Cambridge.

The Rev. Dr. Short was a perfect model of an "*Anglican Churchman*," a sage of the highest order; a Christian with thoughts far nobler to warm his bosom than the cold abstractions of this world's philosophy could supply. He had an imagination rich with images, surpassing the fine and tasteful crea-

tions of the poet's fancy. He had life, feeling, and spirituality, not resembling the turbid emotions of the mere sensitive man, nor the feverish reveries of the mystic. Sin, in all its forms and operations, was the evil he most deplored: the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, alone, was the foundation of all his hopes: and holiness and obedience he delighted in, and studied to cultivate. He never separated the Redeemer's Cross from the Redeemer's yoke. He did not value the faith that was not practical, nor the hope that was not purifying. He was deeply read in the Holy Scriptures, and intimately conversant with the Book of Common Prayer and the Homilies. He took the Word of God as the rule of his faith and life, and loved the Ritual of the Church as the expression of his faith and hope. He was not a mere upholder of order, but he was a cordial lover of it. He used his reason and his judgment, but not in a lawless manner; for he knew both his guides and his restraints, and was thankful for them. He was as little disposed to maintain with the dissenters his private judgment against the decisions of the Church, as he was to renounce with the Papists the legitimate use of his faculties as a reason-

able and accountable being. He *esteemed* the ancient Fathers, but he *loved* the venerable reformers of the Church of which he was a minister. He understood the regimen of that Church, and conscientiously approved it. He had a constant and unfailing consciousness that himself, as his Church, stood upon firm ground, and that he possessed rules for his conduct as a Churchman, which he could explain, vindicate, and act upon. But, then, his heart was free from any feeling of suspicion, much less of uncharitableness towards others. With regard to doctrine, he adhered closely to the Scriptures and to the doctrines of his Church. He knew well the history of the Thirty-nine Articles, and could distinguish that which was Cranmer's from that which belonged to the Swiss and German confessions of faith. He rushed into no extremes, and avoided ultra-ism of every kind. He viewed Church ordinances as the wise and gracious appointments of God; neither deifying the elements of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ with the Papist, nor receiving those elements with cold and lifeless feeling as the mere formalist. As a priest, he felt his office, knew his dignity, cherished in his bosom a solemn sense of his

duty, and in the humility of an exalted mind, and in the benevolence of an affectionate and renewed heart, he proceeded in the strength of divine grace, and laboured and prayed that he might be the honoured instrument of conducting many of his fellow-creatures over this world of pollution and danger, to the regions of eternal light. He advocated public prayer, preaching, and the sacraments. He inculcated public and private duties; and though he was not free from those infirmities which must always belong to the best of men, yet in him were united all the elements of the Christian character, and they were exhibited by him in their proper order, and their just proportion. He was an *Anglican Churchman*.\*

Mr. Herbert, though he could not appreciate all the excellencies of the character of such a man as Dr. Short, was yet able to understand the symmetry, and was struck with the harmony of his conduct with his principles; and, notwithstanding he was far, far in the rear of either his mental, moral, or spiritual acquirements, yet he was able to rejoice that his son was placed at least under the friendly *surveil-*

\* An Essay on the Church by Rev. Joseph Jones, M. A., 1840. Hamilton & Co., 1 vol. 8vo. 229. 7s.

*lance* of such a counsellor. Such men were rare at the period when his son entered the University; but there *were such men*, and he was fortunate enough to have his son introduced to one of the number. Amongst the varied advantages which resulted from the friendship of such a man as Dr. Short, was that of forming the acquaintance at his house of men either of distinguished attainments, of public usefulness, or of general notoriety. It was at his residence that he breakfasted with the celebrated BARON SWEDENBORG in the year 1770, two years prior to his death, and when in his 83rd year. The Baron had visited Cambridge to make proselytes to his doctrines, and as he professed at least reverence for the Established Church, and respect for her clergy, as he declared that he approved of a liturgical service, uniformity of worship, and other rites of the Church, his society was sought for by the curious and attentive observer of the progress of that spirit of restlessness which had already, and has since, led to the formation of so many sects, all divided amongst each other, but all more or less hostile to the Establishment.

Baron Swedenborg was either deceived, or a deceiver. He either laboured under mental

hallucination, or he sought to deceive the ignorant and unwary. With more of learning, wit, and apparent piety, than Joanna Southcott, who succeeded him at a distance of twenty years, they both rested their claims for reverence and belief on merely their individual assertions. The following conversation with Swedenborg will supply a sketch of the system which he propagated, and the absurdities which are still believed by thousands of his adherents, both at home and abroad.

*Dr. Short.* But upon what grounds, Baron, do you ask our belief in your new system, or rather new religion? Do you work miracles? Can you heal the sick, restore the dead to life, or give any proof of any distinct revelation being made to you?

*Swedenborg.* It is now 27 years ago since the Lord was pleased, in a singular and special manner, to favour me with a personal appearance. In the year 1743 he opened in me the eyes of my mind and faith, so as to enable me to see the spiritual world, and to converse with spirits and angels. This privilege has been continued to me to this day, and this very morning I have had a glimpse of Aaron and Zechariah. The varied spectacles I have

beheld, or the revelations made to me of heaven and hell, of the state of man after death, the true worship of God, and the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, I have communicated to man in my works, or by my discourses. That this benighted country may not be without the true light, I have visited it, as well as other lands, not for wealth, for I am rich; not for fame, for I do not seek it; but that man may no longer remain ignorant as to the real truth.

*Dr. Short.* But what evidence do you supply that these visions were really seen by you, and that the whole is not a cunningly devised fable, to exalt yourself or to establish a system of your own, and thus gratify the self-love and vanity which belong to all of our natures?

*Swedenborg.* I do *not* pretend to work miracles. The power of working miracles belonged to *one* era of the church, not to all; to *one* class of persons, not to all. The revelations made to me are not to be discerned by those who are spiritually blind. I assert, that I have conversed with angels face to face, I have beheld their glory, in their habitations in heaven I have seen them; their houses resemble those we here inhabit, but they are more beautiful, more magnificent; they have rooms and cham-

the religious teaching of the Gospel be righteously embodied in the law of the land? Are not the encouragement and support of religion by our national authorities matters which may be, and ought to be, embodied in our national law? Is not the temporal support of religion a social obligation? The institution and the preservation of a Christian church is a duty which all Christian governors must owe to the people over whom they rule; and the support of such an institution is a duty which the people owe to one another and the State. Our national authorities have the right to enforce the support of their State religion, and the State religion is not deteriorated by that alliance, or by this aid. The State is spiritualized by its connection with religion. The Church is not secularized by its connection with the State. It is not the State that spiritualizes the Church, but the Church which spiritualizes the State. The State cannot injure the spiritual condition of the Church, as it is out of the power of the State to exercise any spiritual influence. It is a capital and a common error on the part of the enemies of the Church of England to allege, that the Church suffers by its connection with the State. The doctrines, preaching, mo-



ral and social government and discipline of the Church, are not temporal, but spiritual, and the spiritual state of the Church cannot be therefore affected by the recognition or support of that Church by the State.

This is a specimen of the conversations which were held from day to day between Mr. Forster and Mr. Herbert on the great questions of religious equality, the divine legality of a National Church, on her tithes, endowments, prelates, bishops; on her Catholic and Apostolical character; on the alleged Papal descent of the Church; on the indefensible character of dissent; and on the rights of conscience. Mr. Forster, at length, avowed himself satisfied on all leading and important questions, and confessed that dissent was a religion of opposition; that opposition and excitement were its life and soul; and that an attachment to dissenting principles required to be kept up in the minds of most of their possessors by a keen hatred, and then “a little round abuse of the Church itself.” He admitted that he had become a *dissenting* minister because he had been brought up a dissenter by his parents; that dissent in *theory* he understood when he took upon himself the office of teacher, and believed it; but that

it was not till he saw dissent in *practice*, dissent *at work*, that he perceived the real character of those principles he had in *theory* adopted.

Faithful to the moral engagement into which he had entered when these conversations commenced, at the expiration of three months after their conclusion, during which period his intimacy with Mr. Herbert gave rise to new persecutions on the part of his "church and congregation," Mr. Forster sent in his resignation, and announced his intention of proclaiming publicly his reasons for leaving the Independent connection, and attaching himself to the one only true Catholic and Apostolic Church of England.

In the *first* of these lectures he established the claims of the Church of England to respect, confidence, sympathy, gratitude, and love; for it was the Church established by the laws of the country; the Church to which our forefathers were attached, and in defence of which a noble army of martyrs died; the Church which had proved the faithful depository and guardian of the faith once delivered to the saints; the Church which had been and still was the most efficient instrument of diffusing the influence of real religion; the Church,

whose services were scriptural, simple, and solemn; and the Church, which could produce abundant evidence, that God's presence and blessing had been, and even still, notwithstanding the lukewarm state of many of the clergy, were with her.

In the *second* of these lectures, he demonstrated the unlawfulness of separation from the Established Church. He proclaimed that causeless separation was the essence of schism. He showed that as the Church does not practise idolatry, does not teach bad doctrines, is in perfect harmony with the Christian faith, is not schismatical, and is moral as well as doctrinal, and practical as well as theoretical, that there were no scriptural grounds for separation from her. He proved that the separation from the Church on the part of dissenters was on the ground of things *indifferent*, and was therefore anti-scriptural and unlawful. He showed that differences of opinion on secondary matters did not justify separation; nor even the existence of improper members, nor an acknowledged decay of religion, nor minor imperfections in the Church; nor even certain customs or practices for which no express warrant could be brought from Scripture; and

that those who separate from the Established Church on the score of the imposition of some things not enjoined in Holy Writ, and declare it to be a duty to follow, and conform to, the practice of the church in the Apostles' days, are bound, if consistent, to follow every apostolic practice of which they find any trace in the New Testament. Where, then, is the *holy kiss*? Where the washing one another's feet? Where *the anointing the sick with oil*?

In the *third* lecture, he pointed out the *unscriptural character of dissent*. He proved that it was without fixed principles, without authority, without purity, and without union, for that division was the natural tendency of dissenterism. That the very genius of Independency is unscriptural, that it is worldly-minded, proud, conceited, self-willed, and in hostility to those connecting links which are essential to good government. That dissent was made up of separate interests; that dissent was fraught with dissent, and was a sort of constituted schism.

And, in his *fourth* lecture, he examined, on the one hand, the objections made by the dissenters to the Church; and, on the other, the objections of Churchmen to dissent; and,

finally, demonstrated that dissent does not provide a sufficient number of ministers; and, above all, of fit ministers; and does not offer any kind of guarantee for the exclusion of unfit ones. That dissent does not provide for the proper maintenance of its ministers, or, indeed, for their maintenance at all. That it does not provide for the erection and maintenance of suitable places of worship. That it does not regulate the connection between the minister and the people, and between the people themselves as members of the church, in such a way as is most conducive to the promotion of mutual respect and brotherly love, peace, order, discipline, or the increase of true religion. For these reasons he left the dissenters, whom he then addressed, and exhorted those who heard him to imitate his example. His exhortations were not given in vain; the church at which Mr. Herbert preached became attended by many of those who had formerly been Mr. Forster's hearers; Mr. Forster himself proceeded to Oxford, went through his necessary studies, received holy orders, and was appointed to a curacy in the neighbourhood of the very town where but three years previously he had preached in a dissenting congregation. The

objections made by the family of the lady, to whom he had ever been attached, to his marriage with her, were now removed, their mutual wishes were gratified, their marriage was celebrated by Mr. Herbert in the parish church of the bride; and Mr. and Mrs. Forster long lived respected in the various parishes in which he officiated as clergyman, was presented after several years, to the vicarage of the church of his native place, and preached with fidelity and zeal that Gospel of which he was at once a humble follower and a zealous evangelist.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE LIFE OF A WORKING CLERGYMAN—THE OLD BACHELOR  
AND THE PRACTICAL EVILS OF THE MORTMAIN ACT—THE  
ANGLO-CAMBRIAN CHURCH—WELSH SUPERSTITION IN  
THE LAST CENTURY—"LAYING THE DEVIL"—WELSH  
METHODIST PREACHING—STATE OF THE WELSH EPISCO-  
PAL CHURCH—WELSH STATISTICS—A LONDON CURACY—  
CHURCH FORMALISTS—ALARM OF THE DEMI-PELAGIANS—  
CHALLENGE TO A DISCUSSION ON CHURCH AND DISSENT—  
THE MARRIAGE OF MR. HERBERT—THE POVERTY OF THE  
CHURCH—MR. HERBERT'S AVERSION TO THE SALE OF  
LIVINGS—NO SIMONY.

THE life of a working clergyman, or rather of a working curate, in a *large* parish, is one of the most arduous and least satisfactory of any portion of the clerical body. For, notwithstanding all his piety, zeal, church-loving spirit, indefatigable ardour, and unwearied assiduity, he always feels that not one-tenth of his duties he is physically able to perform, and that he resembles rather a solitary spring in a desert of dearth and aridity, than a flowing stream passing through refreshed and fertile valleys. This is not the fault of the *parochial system*,

sits, as in the former world ; he lies down, sleeps, and wakes, as in the former world ; he eats and drinks as in the former world ; he enjoys conjugal delight as in the former world ; in a word, he is a man, in all and every respect. Death is not an extinction but a continuation of life, or a passage from one state to another. In the spiritual world there are earths just as in the natural world. There are plains and valleys, mountains and hills, fountains and rivers, paradises, gardens, groves, and woods. There are cities with palaces and houses contained therein ; there are writings and books, employments and merchandises, gold and silver, and precious stones ; in one word, there is in the spiritual world all and every thing that is in the natural world, but only that in heaven such things are in an infinitely more perfect state. The difference is, that all things which are seen in the spiritual world are created in a moment by the Lord, as houses, paradises, meats, and other things, and that they are created according to a correspondence with the interior of angels and spirits, that is, of their affections and thoughts, whereas all things that are seen in the natural world begin to exist and to grow from seed. These are what you call “ my



tenets," but which are revelations made by the Lord, through me, to the Church.

*Dr. Short.* If your system were true, Baron, the description given to us of our glorified bodies, by the apostle, would be false; the statement made by our Saviour, that in heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, would be false; death would be no more the punishment for sin; the resurrection of the body of Christ, as the proof and assurance of the resurrection of our bodies, would have been useless; the declarations of St. John and of St. Paul, as to it being impossible for them to describe the glories of the celestial Canaan, would be inaccurate, inasmuch as you can describe these scenes by houses, gardens, books, rivers, plains, and so forth; the assurance of our Saviour that mansions are prepared for *His* people from the foundation of the world would not be true, since you declare that they are being perpetually created; and the spiritual world which your fancy has created, would bear so great a resemblance to the paradise and the houris of Mahomet, that Paganism might be unable to discover any remarkable or striking difference. But I forgot. According to your system, the Pagan and the Mahometan,

the Jew and the Gentile, are one and all spiritual, and therefore the atonement made by our Saviour was a vain and useless sacrifice. No, Baron Swedenborg, we have not so learned Christ, and will hope ere the few remaining sands in your hour-glass shall have run through, that you will be brought to know and to feel that of one only can it be said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in *me* shall never die."

The interview thus concluded: but who would believe, that seventy years after that period, and sixty-eight after the death of this dreamer, in France, Holland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Poland, North and South America, the West India Islands, the East Indies, and other distant parts of the globe, he should still have his adherents, and that at the twenty-eighth general conference there were fifty societies of members in Great Britain, besides scattered members not united to societies?

"Nor is this," said Dr. Short, "an isolated proof of the dangers and difficulties, errors, follies, superstitions, and dreamings, into which

individual or associated Christians (so called) will fall, when, rejecting the *authority of the Church*, and resting on individual judgment, private opinion, or pretended revelations, either separate men or congregated societies shall trust to their own weakness, have confidence in their own strength, and build up their fanciful theories on the sandy, sinking foundations of uninspired reason, imagination, or fanaticism. Papacy, the Greek Church, the Russian Church and Sectaries, the Monophysites, the Armenian Church, the Georgian Church, with the Momiers, Sublapsarians, Antinomians, Arians, Sabellians, Socinians, Brownists, Mennonites, Quakers, and other sects and churches, also professing to be Christian, have supplied equally convincing proofs of the fallacy of human reason, and the insufficiency of the human mind to understand or appreciate truth, when left unaided by God, or when not wholly guided by him. Let us hold fast then to the doctrines of our glorious Reformation, to the creeds of our Apostolic Church, and to that revelation which is of no doubtful character, but which has God for its author, and heaven for its end."

But though James Herbert was thus fortu-

nate in the superintendence of his studies, and in the advice offered him by so admirable a man, and so true an Anglican Churchman as Dr. Short, yet the general education at Cambridge at that period was almost any thing but ecclesiastical or ministerial. It was the same in 1770 as in 1776, when Mr. Wilberforce entered the very college in which James Herbert had shortly before received the degree of M.A. Cards and horses, dice and wine, feasting and banquets, were more attended to than either the classics, mathematics, or divinity; and if the subject of these memoirs had not been urged on by Dr. Short on the one hand, and impelled by a sense of right on the other, he had inducements held out to him on every hand to indolence, irreligion, and even profligacy. The system of total inattention at Cambridge, some fifty or sixty years since, to the moral and spiritual instruction of those destined for the Church of England is one of the principal causes of the great forgetfulness of Church doctrines and of Church discipline into which the clergy afterwards fell. This neglect is a great defect. The ignorance of a large body of the clergy, till within the few last years, of ecclesiastical history, of councils, doctrines, ceremonies, and heresies, must be

admitted and deplored; and it is one of those reasons why the High Church controversialists of 1841 have hitherto maintained in the debate a high and vantage ground. How is it that, whilst dissenters, the mere separatists from the national faith, have their histories and historians to the year 1838, yet no history of the Church of England, worthy the name, has hitherto appeared to a later period of her history than 1688?

The tastes of our *youth* are those which are the most permanent. Those tastes, when perpetuated, become habits, constitutional parts of our system; the tastes of future life are fluctuating, rarely becoming settled. This was the case with James Herbert. He had contracted a love of poetry, music, and above all, Church music, from his long residence with Mr. Armstrong; and these were his University recreations. James Herbert was convinced that the objections which were made to organs and Church music as practised at cathedrals in former times, and even the rejection of which was agitated in the Convocation of 1562, arose from the little reverence which was displayed by the subordinate members, as is sometimes the case now, and not from any objection to a species

of religious service so delightful and elevating. The singing of psalms or hymns taken out of the Bible was a marked characteristic of the favourers of the Reformation: many were then translated and composed; and much is it to be regretted, that with all the poetical talent or piety, or both, of the members of our Church, a collection so unsuitable to the present times as the one made at that period, should have been allowed to continue to be the best, which we possess in an authorized form. Sternhold and Hopkins have had their day, as have Tate and Brady; and it can excite no surprise that unauthorized hymn-books should appear and have had a very extensive circulation, when the heads of the Church do not supply her millions of worshippers with more suitable forms. The want of such a collection was, in 1775, and much more now, one of the reasons why church singing is so seldom practised by congregations, and why the organist and the charity children often embody the united voices of the assembled hundreds of worshippers. It has been said by Bishop Mant, in his preface to the ancient hymns from the Roman Breviary, that "he knows of no consideration which will justify the act or sanction of an individual"

in contributing to the introduction of *forms of singing* any more than *forms of praying* into our churches and chapels without public legal authority," and that he is "persuaded that every new attempt of the kind only tends to aggravate the evils of such a practice." There is great truth and sense in these observations, which every true Churchman must feel; but yet he has added, "that should it ever be determined by those who have the requisite authority in the Church to take the subject into their grave consideration, and encounter some difficulty, for the purpose of remedying, by God's blessing, great and unquestionable, and continually increasing evils; and should the result of their deliberations be a resolution to adopt the necessary steps for providing, under the proper legal sanction, a book of hymns for the use of the United Church of England and Ireland, the application of the precedent established by our Reformers in the construction of our Book of Common Prayer, and accordingly the adapting of such compositions as form the leading contents of that volume of Breviary Hymns to the use of public, as well as of private devotion, might possibly be deemed not unworthy of a thought." Bishop Mant then desires a new

collection of psalms and hymns; so do the millions of Churchmen who frequent our parochial churches and chapels in the whole of Great Britain. They feel more strongly than ever that to sing praises and hymns to God is a positive duty as well as a great privilege. They know that Clemens has said of the early Christians, "that a good Christian's life is a continual festival; his sacrifices are prayers and praises, reading the Scriptures before meat, and singing psalms and hymns at meat." They know that St. Jerome has recorded, "that in the place where he lived, you could not go into the fields, but you might hear the ploughman at his hallelujahs, the mower at his hymns, and the vine-dresser singing David's Psalms." They know that *Beza*, when speaking of the good done by singing, to the cause of the Reformation, has said, "When I came into the assembly where they were singing the praises of God, I found myself suddenly inspired with a Divine warmth, and strangely affected with love and joy, so that the assembly appeared to me as the gate of heaven or an entrance into glory." They feel that a closer version than we have of the Psalms is still wanted, and that amongst the varied benefits resulting from psalm and



hymn singing, in our churches, one of the most important undoubtedly is that "it greatly helps the poor to acknowledge the things of Christ.". James Herbert had already learned that the then leaders of the rising sect of the Wesleyans were paying great attention to the *singing* of the congregations, that the dissenters were not less anxious, both as to tunes and poetry; and, nearly sixty years afterwards, he has attested that one of the principal grounds of early success in country congregations, amongst both Methodists and dissenters, in drawing large assemblies, was the attention they paid to singing. It is said, indeed, that if St. Augustin could exclaim, "Oh, how much have I wept, how exceedingly moved and affected I have been at the hymns, songs, and harmonious voices of the church! those voices pierced my ears, thy truth entered my soul, and devout affections were raised within me!" when the psalms of his time were far less harmonious and poetical than those which are now used by our beloved Church, it must be a lack of piety which requires further or new stimulants, and which is not satisfied with the improved version of Tate and Brady. Averse, as all true sons of the Church must be to unsanctified novelties, and

to unauthorized introductions of such novelties into her service, it is, however, one of the wants of her clerical and lay members. In private and in public, it is admitted by the mass, that a revised version and the introduction or composition of new psalms and hymns into the Prayer-book, more in harmony with the language of the age and with our wonted and daily religious expressions, is a desideratum; and deeply is it to be desired that it will soon be replied to, by an authorized and suitable collection. The habit of not singing is deplorable; but this habit will never be eradicated until a new collection of psalms and hymns, or a new version of the Psalms, together with improved or more suitable tunes, shall supply the present defects of both.

The college life of James Herbert closed with his twenty-fourth year. It was a period of great public excitement. *How to deal with America* was the all-engrossing topic, both of thought and conversation; and whilst the British Parliament took strong and intimidating measures, the Earl of Chatham, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Hartley brought forward other and conciliatory plans; they were alike unsuccessful.

As the fortune of his family was far from great, and as the expenses attendant on his education had been necessarily large, he resolved that the next year of his life should be spent at home; that his ecclesiastical studies should be persevered in, his biblical studies incessantly continued, and that his preparation for the Ember weeks should be of a deeply sincere and serious character. He felt most anxiously the awful responsibilities he was about to undertake; sought for guidance from Him, who was not only the God of his Church, but *his own* Redeemer; read with avidity a solid mass of sound, practical, and Gospel theology; continued to make himself acquainted with the writings of the leading fathers and reformers of the Church into which he was to enter; understood the history, character, and objects of that liturgy, which he was so often to repeat to the congregations to be committed to his care; made himself familiar with the canons and rubric; noted well the order of the Church, as well as her discipline, worship, and doctrines; and thus prepared to perform all the duties which would devolve on him as a priest or minister of God's word and ordinances with advantage to his own heart, with benefit to others,

with honour to the Church, and, above all, with humility and faith towards his God and Saviour. This chapter should not be closed without recording the cheering and delightful fact, that Mr. Herbert, at this period of his life, was not *merely* a student in divinity, but was also a sincere, because converted, Christian. His heart had been renewed, his nature had experienced that change so admirably described in the nineteenth homily on Repentance; and by faith he had obtained that justification which is described in the eleventh article of our religion, as well as in the admirable homily on that most important subject.

## CHAPTER V.

## SOME PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF MR. FORSTER.

MR. HERBERT'S FIRST CURACIES—A DISSENTING SEMINARY  
 —A DISSENTING STUDENT—MR. ISAAC FORSTER—FEMALE  
 TACTICS—MRS. MANTON AND HER THREE DAUGHTERS  
 —A PLOT—ANONYMOUS LETTERS—DISSENTING SKETCHES  
 —PERSECUTIONS—CHURCH MEETINGS—SCENES—NEW  
 CHARGES AND PLOTS, AND THEIR DEFEAT—A TRIAL—  
 OTHER SCHISMS—MR. FORSTER'S INTERVIEWS WITH MR.  
 HERBERT—CONTROVERSY AS TO STATE RELIGIONS—  
 ANCIENT AND MODERN HERESIES—THE STATE RELIGION  
 MUST BE EPISCOPAL, AND MUST BE DOMINANT, BUT IS  
 NOT, THEREFORE, UNSPIRITUAL—MR. FORSTER RESIGNS,  
 AND BECOMES AN EPISCOPALIAN.

Not far from Kendal, in the mountainous and lake scenery of the county of Westmoreland, was not the first, but the second curacy to which Mr. Herbert was appointed. The first was near Lincoln, and was only held by him till the one was vacant which his friend Dr. Short procured for him. The population of his second curacy was ignorant, scattered, and agricultural, and the low state of Church principles was on a par with Church revenues. The influence of the name of Caleb Rother-

ham among the dissenters, though about twenty-five years had passed away since his death, still existed, and dissenterism was rather on the ascendancy. Caleb Rotherham had formerly directed a dissenting seminary at Kendal, for candidates to Nonconformist pulpits, and had been, likewise, minister of the Presbyterian congregation in that town. He has been thus described by his funereal biographer: "As a minister, his abilities were great, his delivery graceful, his performances instructive, lively, and entertaining, his sentiments nervous, his arguments strong, and his expression just. What he delivered was first tried upon his own mind . . . As a tutor, his capacity was equal to his deportment. His public spirit, desirous to propagate useful knowledge, and his tender concern for the interests of young persons, inclined him to take upon himself the direction of youthful studies, for which he was excellently well qualified. He was of a most communicative temper, and his lectures were rather the open informations of a friend, than the dictates of a master." He died, June 8th, 1752, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and at his death the seminary was discontinued. One of the pupils of Caleb

Rotherham was Mr. Isaac Forster. Young, handsome, fond of poetry, enthusiastic for dissent, a zealous advocate of the voluntary principle, then better known as the principle of Nonconformity, with a pleasing voice, good temper, affable manners, and a wish to be useful, it was by no means surprising that Isaac Forster should soon receive *a call* to a Westmoreland congregation. The clergy who surrounded him heard with indifference at first, and afterwards with annoyance, of the success which attended this dissenting northern orator, whilst the Nonconformist church, to whose call he listened, and whose voice he obeyed, boasted of possessing another Howe or Calamy. For a few years this went on well; but the spirit of opposition crept into the flock, and the cry was heard, "*that Mr. Forster was too doctrinal.*" He found that the cry had first issued from the house of Mrs. Manton, a member of the church and congregation over which he was pastor, who, blest with three daughters, all marriageable but none married, had long been distressed at the *bachelor* condition of her unmarried pastor. Until Miss Sophia, Miss Charlotte, and Miss Mary, had attained the respective ages of twenty-four, twenty-six, and twenty-

eight, their widowed mother was not *very*, impatient as to THEIR spinsterhood, nor as to *Mr. Forster's* celibacy. She had, indeed, discoursed, in glowing terms, to the listening Mr. Forster, on the talents of her eldest daughter, Miss Mary; on the piety and prudence of the second, Miss Charlotte; and on the beauty, amiability, and loveliness of the youngest, Miss Sophia. As months returned, and as moons waned, the anxious Mrs. Manton returned to the charge, sought to whet the appetite of her pastor for marriage by renewed, and sometimes laboured, descriptions of the joys of domestic life, the necessity for marriage to render a preacher acceptable to married people and to persons of advanced age, as well as to increase their usefulness to the young, and to give a soberness and sedateness of character, so essential to ministerial respectability; and would do all but propose to Mr. Forster the hands and hearts of each of her jewels in their turn. Sometimes, indeed, she would flatter herself that he was embarrassed by the choice; that he loved them all *so dearly* that he knew not which he loved the best; and that if she had but one, instead of three, she would, long ago, have been made Mrs. Forster. In wintry wea-



then, when the wind blew loud and the rain fell in torrents, she would send him presents of her best “cherry brandy,” accompanied by amiable notes, written by one of the *trio*; then elder wine, “which he had been good enough to say was delicious,” that he might chase away from his *solitary* fireside the ‘*ennui*’ which her mamma feared this sad weather would expose him to;” and as to invitations to tea parties, and to quiet, early suppers, Mr. Forster could have produced in a court of law “*billets doux*” enough to convince even the most incredulous jury that the three Miss Manton’s had, one and all, sought to seduce him to the flowery paths of coñubial happiness and matrimonial respectability.

Three years had worn away in this state of indecision, from the period when Mrs. Manton had first begun seriously to think of marrying her daughters, and yet no proposal had been made by Mr. Forster; in fact, Miss Sophia was in her twenty-seventh, Miss Charlotte in her twenty-ninth, and Miss Mary in her thirty-first year, when, after a week’s consideration and consultation on the part of, and between Mrs. Manton and her daughters, it was resolved, “that matters should be brought to a point, and

that either Mr. Forster should speak out manfully and declare his intention not to marry, and therefore should no longer enjoy their society and friendship, or he should be made to feel that the only way of securing to himself the permanency of his past four years' enjoyment, was to make an offer of marriage to at least *one* of the three." This was the *programme*; but how was it to be carried out? In whose interest was the plot to be conducted? In whose behalf were the measures to be taken which were to lead in all probability to a marriage? Mrs. Manton cut the gordian knot; her eldest daughter was thirty-one, two years too old; her youngest daughter, though pretty, amiable, and pleasing, was *not* a church member, and being yet but twenty-seven, had chances of marriage in another quarter, as Mr. Moore, the attorney-at-law, had become somewhat assiduous in his attentions to her during the last three weeks; but Charlotte was a member of Mr. Forster's church, somewhat sedate in her manner, though not very grave in her character, and as she had received from her pastor some notes in answer to her warm "billets doux", with cherry brandy and elder wine, which neither begun with "dear Madam," nor ended

with “your’s respectfully;” but often commenced with “Will my dear friend Sophia permit me to thank,” &c. and terminated with “her unchanging friend, Isaac,” it was proposed by Mrs. Manton, consented to by Misses Sophia and Mary, and not opposed by Miss Charlotte herself, that she should become the pastoreſs of the congregation, the *to be chosen* companion, *nolens volens*, for life of their to be benedicted pastor. But how was this to be brought about? This was not difficult to determine. When ladies, who take the lead in dissenting congregations, wish to get up a plot, they will very easily meet with both male and female abettors. An elderly maiden lady, who was a member of the flock of Mr. Forster, having frequently expressed, both publicly and privately, her aversion to ~~un~~*married* ministers—not that *she* aspired to the hand of her pastor, for she was too old and ugly, and he was too young and handsome to admit of such a theory ever crossing her mind, but who had often said in a *demi-whisper* even in his presence, “that Charlotte Manton was the woman to whom he ought to be united,”—was soon selected as the head conspirator in this female Guy Faux plot; and she was informed by an anonymous letter, written

in a feigned hand, “that her dear friend Mrs. Manton had acted towards her an unkind and unfriendly part, for that she had concealed from her the fact, that on some day in the very next week ‘her daughter Charlotte was about to be married to Mr. Forster.’” When the old maiden lady received this *anonymous* communication (a mode of proceeding so peculiarly dissenting in its character), which was carefully slipped under her door on a foggy night, at the close of October, her feelings were those of both joy and indignation. She was joyous that *her* choice had been approved, and that her friend Charlotte was so soon to become a bride; but she was “*indignant*” to think that her friend Mrs. Manton should have sought to conceal from *her* indeed, above all persons in the world, an event so pregnant with happiness to her family, and doubtless of joy to both the pastor and the church. Still, she resolved not to reproach Mrs. Manton, but “to pay her off in her own coin;” and as she had not been informed of the event by her friend (a proof she wished it to be kept a secret), to make known the fact everywhere both far and near, and thus defeat the supposed desire for privacy and concealment on the part of Charlotte’s mother.

The next morning, after the fog had cleared off, and the sun had dispersed the mists, the old maiden lady commenced her secret-telling travels. "Have you heard the news?" she asked one. With the inquiry; "I dare say you are as delighted as I am at what is about to happen," she accosted another. With "Well, I have called to tell you a piece of delightful news," she commenced a conversation with a third. And to the two deacons' wives she was the first to make known the joyful intelligence. In fine, not less than twenty chatter-boxes were all set to work in one morning, and "the secret" of the previous night was a few hours afterwards as well known, as a telegraphic despatch published in a newspaper. Some said "They had always expected as much;" others said, "He was too good for her;" but more, "that it was a very suitable match;" and no one thought of questioning the truth of the old maiden lady's statement, because it was known to all how intimate she was with the Manton family. To no one did she hint any thing about the "*anonymous letter*," as it would have been derogatory to her pride to have had it supposed that the Mantons "*could* have kept any thing from *her*." The next day was the chapel night.

Mr. Forster was "*congratulated*," and had his hand pressed warmer than usual by *several* ladies; he could not tell why or wherefore, except that he had been writing a controversial pamphlet against some new super-sublapsarian heresy, in which he had exhibited much talent, and had the better of the argument, though it *did* strike him as rather odd, that so many of his ordinarily very quiet and even cold and stiff female hearers should all at once take such an interest in his literary triumphs. Whilst meditating on this rather strange enthusiasm on his way home from chapel, he was accosted by a well-known voice, as he passed by the house of one of his female members, it was that of the old maiden lady. "Well, good night, Mr. Forster, good night; you never drop in and see me now, but it's very excusable; I should do the same as you do if I were in your responsible situation. I am sure I congratulate you; I hope it will contribute to your usefulness. Good night, good night; you can't have much time to spare for *old* ladies." If Mr. Forster had paid attention to the emphasis laid on the word "*old*" by his female interrogator, he might have had a clue to the various congratulations he had received, and which continued to embarrass

him; but after assuring her “that no duties should prevent him from coming in on some early evening to have a long chat with her,” he hastened onwards. He thought that *she* also was occupying herself about his pamphlet; that she thought his time was taken up too much in writing and preaching to enable him to call on her; that the “responsible situation” to which she referred was that of his being a pastor, and was therefore bound to defend truth against error; that her *congratulations* were on his successful defence of truth, and which he supposed she hoped and believed would contribute to his usefulness. As to the Mantons, they perceived, with pleasure, that the bait had caught the old lady most successfully—and the nods, winks, and smiles, which they professed not to understand, convinced them that they had adopted the only course to bring Mr. Forster to some point, either to obtain a husband for Charlotte, or to put an end to an intimacy which had been very expensive to them in presents, dinners, suppers, and tea-parties, and had hitherto brought no corresponding good.

The next day, Friday, the most mischievous day in all the week, when dissenting ministers

are always “*open*” to invitations to all sorts of parties, from rural pic-nics in summer, to warm and comfortable dinners in wintry weather, Mr. Forster received, at an early hour in the morning, a “*billet-doux*” from Mrs. Manton. She invited him to “a plain family dinner at three,” and to meet the old maiden lady and a few other of the chapel friends to’ tea. Mr. Forster, nothing loth, replied as usual, “with love to the ladies” at the close, and a message to Charlotte about a “rose-tree which had blown in his study that morning, for which he had a great affection—she knew why;”—in plain terms, because she had given it to him. The dinner passed off as usual. Old jokes about calves’ head; and riddles about *Jon Quils* and *Mary Golds*, *John Dorys* and *Ann Chovys* helped off the monotony of a family dinner, where there are four ladies to one gentleman, all aspiring to his smiles, and all “most happy to take wine with him.” At length the back parlour or dining-room was left for the front parlour or drawing-room; Mrs. Manton directed Mr. Forster to hand in Charlotte; Charlotte was dressed most bewitchingly; Charlotte’s hair was better arranged than her sister’s; Charlotte was told to play something new to



Mr. Forster on the guitar; Charlotte was placed in an attitude of brilliancy and effect; and, in one word, there was a dead-set made at poor Isaac, which was afterwards to take place in a far more formidable shape.

The evening circle was wholly formed, with the exception of the old maiden lady, who had not yet arrived: but at last the door opened, and she made her appearance. Mr. Forster was sitting next to Miss Charlotte, who was engaged in preparing the tea-cups for their visitors; and as they were at that moment occupied in the little souchong and bohea arrangements of a tea-board, they did not perceive her approach them. "Come, come," said the old lady, "I am not going to scold you both," addressing herself to Mr. Forster and Miss Charlotte, "for not noticing me before, but I *am* going to scold you for your *secrecy*, both of you—you naughty creatures, not to tell *me* who take so great an interest in your happiness;" and then, holding out her hand to her pastor, she added, "but never mind that, I told you last night I *congratulated* you, and so I do." Miss Charlotte, in spite of her having been a party to the scheme which led to such a *dénouement*, could not help blushing; Mr. Forster now

beheld the secret of the “congratulations” he had received, and felt for the moment embarrassed and uncomfortable; but summoning up all his energies, especially as he knew not what might be the extent of the report to which he was evidently indebted for the congratulations he had received the previous day, he exclaimed, half laughingly, but half earnestly, “And pray, my dear friend, what is it that you congratulate me on? My new pamphlet? My last sermon? My good health? My new buckles, or my new coat?” The old maiden lady was not thus to be disconcerted. Charlotte’s blushes confirmed in her mind the truth of the statement she had received, and therefore, in a half-whisper, but loud enough for all those present to hear, she said, “*I congratulate you on your approaching marriage!*” “Ha! Ha! Ha!” shouted the dissenting deacons; and “He! He! He!” echoed their wives and daughters, for the tea-party was no less than twenty in number; whilst Mr. Grundy, who was the sort of Joe Miller of the congregation, exclaimed, “That’s speaking out, Mr. Forster—no mincing there.” Mr. Forster, “conscious of his own integrity,” and satisfied that if indeed he *was* himself, he

had no more idea of marrying Miss Charlotte, than of uniting himself in wedlock to her mother, turned again to the old maiden lady, and inquired, "And pray, my kind friend, *to whom* am I about to be married?" "Oh, that is too bad," retorted the old maiden lady, "with the lady so near you too!" Miss Charlotte blushed again; the deacons and their wives again laughed; Mr. Forster became somewhat disconcerted! and Mrs. Manton, affecting some gravity and maternal dignity, said to her to whom she had addressed the letter, which had given rise to all these conversations and explanations, "My dear friend, do speak out, for else, as poor Charlotte is so near Mr. Forster, it will be supposed that *she* is the party you refer to." "And so she is, my good friend," replied the old maiden lady; "you and Charlotte thought proper to keep it a secret from me, did you? but you see little birds have great ears!" "Then all I can say is, that *I* know nothing about it," said Mrs. Manton, with a perfectly imperturbable air and manner. "Nor I," said Miss Sophia; "Nor I," said Miss Mary; "Nor I, indeed," whispered Miss Charlotte, who still continued to be very busy both with blushing and the tea-spoons.

The old maiden lady did not know whether to look surprised or offended ; for if she looked surprised, she would convict herself of having set about a report on too shallow grounds ; and if she looked offended, it might be thought that she did not know how to take a joke, for she was still convinced, notwithstanding all this denial, that Mr. Forster and Miss Charlotte *were* about to be married. So she resolved on looking neither ; but simply on re-affirming her proposition. “ I don’t care what you say, you naughty creatures,” she replied ; “ the fact is the same, you know, and I shall be most happy to witness the marriage. You know, my dear Mr. Forster (then turning to him), I have long wished to see you become a benedict ; have I not ?” “ Yes, yes, yes,” laughed out Mr. Forster, who wished to get rid of the subject by a side wind or a mirth-taking course ; “ I know you are very good, and kind, and amiable, but I am *sorry* to say you are misinformed.” The words “ *sorry to say*” was the signal for Miss Charlotte to leave the room, as she had become too affected by her blushes and by the conversation to remain ; and Mrs. Manton left instantly afterwards, “ *fearing that her daughter must be indisposed.*” As Sophia and Mary re-

maimed behind, they ASSURED both deacons and deaconesses that there was no truth in the report; and, after a suspension of tea and a little uncomfortable feeling on the part of the visitors, during half an hour, Mrs. Manton and Charlotte returned to the drawing-room; tea, cakes, music, conversation, and family worship, followed by supper, wine, and punch, succeeded with true dissenting regularity in the upper walks of dissenting life, and at twelve o'clock all had regained not only their homes, but their pillows, except the Mantons and Mr. Forster.

Mrs. Manton and her daughters were divided between delight and doubt. They were delighted that the ice had been broken, but they doubted as to the result. The evening had been less lively than usual. They thought that Mr. Forster had become more stiff and formal as the hours advanced. In taking leave of them, he had, contrary to later custom, returned to his primitive habit of saying *Miss Sophia*, *Miss Charlotte*, and *Miss Mary*, instead of *Sophia*, *Charlotte*, and *Mary*; and the old maiden lady had been treated with marked coolness on the breaking up of the party. It was, however, resolved that the next day Mrs. Manton should write to her, and inquire as to

the origin of the report, and should also beg of Mr. Forster to call on her, and then on Mrs. Manton, and see what could be "*done*" in the matter.

Mr. Forster had returned home much annoyed and dissatisfied. He reproached himself for having become so intimate with the family of the Mantons, examined all his past conduct towards each of its members, lamented that he had, perhaps by his very frequent visits, given some cause for the report, and determined, if possible, to trace it to its source, since he was convinced that it would lead to yet graver and more unpleasant consequences. The next day was Saturday: he had hoped to study, but it was impossible; he felt that he was the laughing-stock of his congregation, and that, as he had already perceived the commencement of a schism in his church, that this would increase that schism and diminish his influence.

The next day, then, though Saturday, he proceeded to the old maiden lady's, discovered the origin of the report, and saw the letter which had given rise to it, but could not perceive any resemblance between such handwriting and that of any one with whom he was acquainted.

Mrs. Manton professed to be indignant, said that Mr. Forster was bound to find out the writer of the letter, that it was taking away her daughter's character to give out that she was about to be married to a gentleman who had not made her an offer, and the non-marriage with whom, might lead to very many most unpleasant rumours; and, finally, hinted that something must now be *done* of a *very* decisive character. What that something *was*, she left Mr. Forster to guess, but she took care that the old maiden lady should say to him, "Well, Mr. Forster, the best denial you can give to the report is, to make an offer *now*, for you see the delight with which it was received by all parties." From that moment Mr. Forster suspected Mrs. Manton. He remembered Mrs. Manton had once boasted of her ability to counterfeit handwriting, and he could never forget the pains she had taken to hold up to his admiration the whole of her daughters, and latterly, especially Miss Charlotte. The next day the Mantons did not appear at chapel, and all were on the "*qui vive*" to know the reason why. Mr. Forster was increasingly annoyed. He received, on the Monday, an anonymous letter. It counselled him to be careful, at the

present critical moment, of his reputation.' It advised him to weigh well all his steps, and to remember that *his* usefulness and the prosperity of *his* church depended on *his* decision. The letter was concocted by Mrs. Manton; and the old maiden lady's nephew, who was staying with her for a few days, was the copyist. Every thing tended to confirm Mr. Forster in his belief, that a plot was set on foot against him, and he determined to *resist*. Day after day transpired; no more "*billet doux*" reached him from the Mantons; no more inquiries as to his health; no more invitations came in rapid succession; and it was whispered in his ear by one of his deacons, that a servant of Mrs. Manton had declared, that "she knew, for a certainty, that if Mr. Forster did not make an offer to Miss Charlotte now, that her mistress would leave the chapel, or take some other proceedings." *What was to be done?* Mr. Forster did not love Charlotte Manton, had no desire to marry her, thought her ill-suited for a dissenting minister's wife, and had cherished, for some years, an affection for a young lady whom he had seen several times at Kendall, but whose relatives would never consent to her becoming the wife of an Indepen-



dent minister. Mrs. Manton and her daughters decided, however, that they would not leave suddenly the chapel; that they would continue to attend every Sunday morning, and go to another place of sectarian worship in the evening, but would hold out no right-hand of fellowship, unless Mr. Forster should prove, by his conduct, that he was willing to obey their wishes, and to make an offer of marriage to Charlotte. "That he might remain without excuse," to adopt the phraseology of the eldest sister, he was given to understand, by no very round-about proceeding, "that if he made an offer to Miss Charlotte Manton he would not be rejected;" but at the same time, his friendly informant whispered to him, "that there *were letters* in Mrs. Manton's possession which he had addressed to her daughter, written in a style of familiarity and friendship which nothing could justify, unless he had intended to make an offer of marriage." "Worse and worse," muttered Mr. Forster to himself, when his informant withdrew; "there is nothing more necessary than an action for a breach of promise of marriage to complete my misfortunes." This state of affairs continued for several weeks, the Mantons coldly hearing, and coldly bowing to their

former idol, and the female portion of the congregation regarding him as an offender against Miss Charlotte, though to what extent, and with what degree of criminality, no one could either guess or affirm. But this state of things could not last. The Mantons were too much disappointed and chagrined by the failure of all their plots, longer to restrain their feelings of animosity, and a series of sermons he was preaching on the Epistle to the Romans, was laid hold of by the Mantons as a suitable occasion for promulgating the report that Mr. Forster was too doctrinal; and then, the next week, "that he was, in heart, an *Antinomian*." Mrs. Manton invited to her house the long neglected enemies of Mr. Forster, whom she had nicknamed the "demi-pelagians," when he was in favour; but now she avowed her *conviction* that *they* were right, and that *she* was wrong, and that *they* had more discernment than herself. As it was yet, however, too soon to commence an open attack on Mr. Forster, since the motives of Mrs. Manton and her daughters might be susceptible of suspicion, they decided to adjourn, for a few weeks longer, the outpourings of the vials of their fury, and, in the meantime, to take every measure in their power for secur-

ing a formidable stand against him, at the next church-meeting. Mr. Forster saw with dismay the proceedings of his foes. He knew and felt that the moment was approaching when "a split" would be unavoidable, but he was not ignorant of the sort of influence which a little wealth will always exercise in a dissenting congregation; and he was also aware that a minister is never placed in so false and difficult a position as when he is subjected to suspicions of having acted dishonourably towards a lady.

The church-meeting was at last held; Mr. Forster was distinctly accused by Mrs. Manton of having acted with a want of candour and delicacy towards herself and family; he was charged by Benjamin Davies, a member, with preaching ultra-Calvinism; and by Sarah White, a poor member, of having neglected to visit her during a late and somewhat serious illness. The meeting was long and vehement. Mr. Forster sought, as much as possible, to subdue his just indignation, and to put the best construction on the conduct of Benjamin Davies and Mrs. White; but the majority decided that *the whole of the charges should be gone into*, and that their pastor should virtually be put upon his trial.

Mr. Forster, though possessing much of cheerfulness and vivacity in his character, and a goodly portion of *bonhomie* and even humour, was a man of decision and energy when he thought he discovered error, or perceived with clearness a line of duty. “If I yield now,” he said, “I am ruined for ever. If I maintain not my ground now, I shall lead a life of poverty and of uselessness. I belong not to a Church which has bishops to appeal to, and ecclesiastical tribunals to judge my cause; but I belong to a denomination which has no judges but interested parties, who decide in their own cases, in favour of themselves.” Yet, as he had nothing to fear from his opponents on the ground of any act of his life, he determined to meet the charges, to visit and explain all matters to his remaining friends, and to fight inch by inch with his opponents the ground they desired to take from him. He drew up his case, printed it, circulated it, sent it to a few neighbouring ministers, though there were but few, and then prepared a list of his witnesses, and of the evidence they could supply. Mrs. Manton and her daughters were not less active. They, and the schismatics who had joined them, sent an attorney to the village

where Mr. Forster had been born, raked up all the facts and anecdotes they could collect together about his earlier days, and before he had been brought to confess himself a sinner, and seek for mercy through Jesus Christ his Saviour, and finally got up a cruel charge of something like an offer of marriage he had made, when nineteen years of age, to a farmer's daughter, which, though she had not formally accepted, had led her to entertain hopes which he had not since either acknowledged or gratified. The thoughtless little notes of friendly intercourse which he had unheedingly written to the Mantons, were arranged in order of dates against him; and though Mrs. Manton *now* declared, "that after what had transpired, her daughter should not marry him if he were as rich as Croesus, and as wise as Solomon," yet it was put to *the church* whether such letters were not calculated to make the world believe what it did believe, and which had led to the report of which she pretended to complain as so injurious to her daughter's reputation, and to the happiness of the whole of her family. As to the charge of ultra-Calvinism, small pieces of sermons, fragments written from memory, and portions of conversations half disfigured, and

the other half false, were brought against him ; whilst the woman who complained of not having been visited when sick, summoned up cruelty and wickedness enough to say, “ that it was not surprising that their minister could not find time to visit a *poor* member, when he was engaged in trying to deceive a *rich* member’s *daughter*, and that for *her* part she was one of those who said with the apostle, ‘ Show me your faith without your works, and *I will show you my faith by my works.*’ ”

Still the really infected members were but few, for though the majority at the first meeting had voted for an inquiry into the charges, many had done so to gratify their dissenting taste for scandal, and some from a conviction that he would clear himself ; so when the second church-meeting was held, every one of his supporters was present.

The defence of Mr. Forster as to the Manton charge was victorious. He produced the letters of the ladies. He did so with reluctance and sorrow ; but as he was accused of making love to them, he was bound to exonerate himself, and showed that his epistles had only been replies to the fine speeches, civil words, and “ delicate attentions ” of both mother and

daughters. But his defence was overwhelming when he produced a drawing in lead pencil by Miss Manton, with some four lines of poetry on the back, written in the very same sort of disguised manner as that in which the anonymous letter to the old maiden lady had been copied. It was in vain that Mrs. Manton sought to get over the effect produced on all minds by the detection of this act of deception. Useless were her efforts to convince the majority that she was justified in this proceeding, in order to bring Mr. Forster to declare what were his "intentions," for on which side were the "intentions" was evident to all who were not blindly partial, or resolutely inimical: and the Mantons retired to their dwelling defeated and vanquished.

But the "ultra-Calvinistic" charge, and the charge of having acted with want of good faith to the farmer's daughter, still remained to be gone into—and more than one meeting was held to hear the investigation and the defence. As to the "*ultra-Calvinistic*" charge, he appealed to those who heard him: and left them individually to decide, whether he had preached such doctrines, as well as produced the pamphlet he had written in opposition to the

Antinomian heresy; but with respect to the farmer's daughter he incurred the expense of having herself and family sent for from more than forty miles off, a distance in those times by no means inconsiderable, with bad roads and crazy conveyances; and proved from her own lips, as well as from the evidence of her father and mother, that there had never been more than a brotherly and sisterly affection between them when young, which still continued in more advanced years and under change of fortune and circumstances, and that never had it entered into their minds to complain of one, for whom they cherished a sincere and profound affection. The charge had been got up by Mrs. Manton's lawyer, out of the idle tittle-tattle of a country village. Mrs. Manton declared that Mr. Forster had bribed his witnesses, and subjected the farmer's daughter to a true dissenting cross-examination; but the charge against her minister was disproved; and as to his alleged inattention to the sick member, it was shown, that the person instructed to inform him of her illness had neglected to do so, and had afterwards sought to cover her inattention by a positive falsehood. Thus truth prevailed, and faction should have been shamed or frowned to the earth; but it



was not so, and when is it the case in a dissenting congregation?

Annoyed but not defeated, vexed and irritated but not crushed, the Manton family now resolved on separating from the chapel, and on holding occasional meetings at their own house, as well as at the residences of those who determined, with them, to oppose and harass Mr. Forster. The death of one of the deacons led to the introduction of new elements of discord into this "*dissenting interest*," and the minister found his spirit perplexed and his temper annoyed by endless reports, by burlesque stories, by small events exaggerated into matters of vast importance, and by the constant action of a small but irritating opposition against him, which was always the rallying point for the offended, the disappointed, or the aggrieved. Sometimes anonymous letters reached him complaining of his doctrines, and others accusing him of foppery, of love of dress, of his manner and style of preaching, of his accent, of the intonation of his voice, of his theatrical attitude, and of *his want of faithfulness*. The deacons or their wives often complained that "the church did not thrive so much as it formerly did," "that the quarterly collections had

fallen off," that "the prayer-meetings were not so well attended," and that "the communion-table was surrounded by fewer communicants." Of course *all* the blame was laid at *his* door, the loss of Mrs. and the Miss Mantons' subscription and influence was deplored, the forces of the enemy were exaggerated, idle tales about the intended erection of a new Independent chapel, and of the expected arrival of a young and very clever man from the then academy of the Independents, were constantly repeated before him, accompanied by hints that the salary he had hitherto received must be diminished, unless affairs took a new turn, and the pew-rents' and collections increased. Mr. Forster felt his spirit broken by the hectoring insolence of some, the cold distance of others, and the changed manner of nearly all. He adopted various plans with the view of improving this wretched state of things; he preached sermons on the *duties* of pastors and people, on the characteristics of a true Christian church, on the necessity for Christian *union*, and on various other topics, all bearing on the divided or lukewarm condition of his flock and congregation; but these attempts to heal the breach, only tended to widen it; and he was

counselled “not to take to scolding, for that two could play at that game as well as one.” He visited his flock, but the enthusiasm, once so exciting and encouraging to him, had all vanished; the greetings with which he was once saluted were now chilling, if not repulsive; other chapels and other ministers in other, and sometimes in neighbouring places, were spoken of as being most thriving and successful, and the “possibility” of regaining Mrs. Manton and her daughter, as also her “*numerous* friends,” represented as the only thing to be done to restore peace and satisfaction.

Mr. Forster adopted other plans. He delivered discourses to young men, to young women, to children, to aged persons, and to all classes, in a variety of categories. He preached to masters—then to servants—then to husbands and wives—and, in fact, on all social, family, and even political relations;—but still the congregation fell off, not largely, but yet visibly—and at last some persons openly declared, “that as God no longer gave him seals to his ministry, it was his duty to withdraw.” This was opposed warmly by some of his poorer friends, who continued to remain faithful to him in this period of his

trial and adversity; but the wish had been expressed, and it reached his ears.

Mr. Forster resolved, before he adopted any step of importance, to examine his own conscience, conduct, and heart. He found, indeed, that, like all the children of God, he was not free from error or mistake, from sin or from infirmity; but he could lay his hand on his heart, and say, that he had preached and laboured amongst his church and congregation with fidelity, and had not to reproach himself for any external act which could diminish his influence, or destroy his usefulness. What then could be the cause of all this change? Were his sermons less eloquent or impressive? No. Was he as often in his study, and on his knees, as formerly? Even more so. Did he preach as affectionately and zealously, as when first he received "*the call?*" Undoubtedly. Were his manners less gracious or friendly? There was no change. Had he become dictatorial, imperious, and proud? He could not honestly accuse himself of these failings. Was the fact of his remaining unmarried, the cause of this diminution in both the zeal and number of his formerly enthusiastic friends? This could not be the case or the reason, for was

he not also unmarried when he was at the very zenith of his power and influence, and when he was held up to other pastors as the *ne plus ultra* of a dissenting minister. Mr. Forster consulted his friends; took advice of two or three brother ministers; corresponded with some of the elder Nonconformist preachers in London; and the result of all these counsels, of all the advice given him, and of all the manœuvring and plots against him hatched up by his enemies was, that he was convinced that the principles of dissent were wrong, and that they offered no security, no protection, no shelter, against the perpetual oscillations of men's minds, and the never-ending changes in men's characters.

It was at this period of his personal history that he made the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Herbert. They met at the house of a pious Anglican Churchman, who had heard of the sad treatment to which their respectable neighbour, Mr. Forster, had been exposed by his persecutors, and purposely invited Mr. Herbert to meet him. Mr. Forster, who had begun to perceive that the *voluntary* principle was neither safe, conservative, energetic, nor positive, was not wholly unprepared for the conversation to

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which that interview led, and though at that time somewhat averse to the union of the Church with the State, he felt in his own person the evils which are inseparable from the dissenting system of private judgment, and a total want of authority in matters of religion. Mr. Forster admitted that the evils from which he suffered were more or less inseparable from dissent—and that the moment no other spiritual authority than that of each individual's interpretation of the Word of God exists in a religious sect or body, there can be no appeal as to doctrine, and consequently no security for those who preach against the false interpretations and injurious calumnies of the hearers. The question, however, which presented itself to Mr. Forster's mind was the following: as he belonged to the Independent denomination, and was a minister of that body, was he justified in separating from it, providing it was a Christian and Protestant church? But Mr. Herbert placed the question in a different light. "The church to which you belong," he said, "is a dissenting church. You dissent then from another church. Why do you dissent? Why do you set yourself in opposition to the Established religion of the realm? Why,

when you find dissent to be neither safe, conservative, nor energetic in its character, do you hesitate to become a member of the *National Church* ? ”

Mr. Forster maintained, that having been brought up an Independent, he ought not to separate from the Independents, if in their churches there were the characteristics of a true church ;—and to his mind the description of a true church as given by Calvin in his Institutes was correct and clear. “ Where the Word of God,” he said, “ is heard with reverence, and the sacraments are not neglected, there we discover, while that is the case, an appearance of the Church, which is liable to no suspicion or uncertainty, of which no one can safely despise the authority, or reject the admonitions, or resist the counsels, or slight the censures, much less separate from it, and break up its unity.”

Mr. Herbert agreed to accept this definition ; however, in some smaller points, he would have preferred a different wording of the meaning conveyed ; but then he required, that if he should demonstrate to Mr. Forster’s satisfaction that the Church of England was *just such a Church*, and should show that Indepen-

dency did *not* possess the required qualifications according to scriptural authority, that he would follow up his convictions by a resignation of the charge which had been committed to him, and would become at once a member of the Church of England, and take the necessary steps for entering that Church, after due preparation and ordination, as one of her ministers. Mr. Forster had no hesitation in consenting to accept these conditions, and, during many days, conversations were continued, from which we can only make a few of the most important extracts.

*Mr. Herbert.* What are the principal reasons on which dissent from the Church of England is founded?

*Mr. Forster.* Its connection with the State, its general form and constitution as a national religion, the imposition of a stated form of prayer, the pretended right of scriptural ceremonies, the terms on which ministers are admitted into their office, and the want of liberty to choose their own ministers.

*Mr. Herbert.* With respect to its connection with the State, it ought, I think, rather to be said that the State, to secure to itself the moral aid and influence of an effective system of episco-



pal direction, clerical influence, and Church support, has united itself to that Church, or rather has placed itself under the protection of episcopal religious discipline.

*Mr. Forster.* In fact, it might be said, according to your view of the question, that the Established Church is neither more nor less than an universal Home Mission.

*Mr. Herbert.* Precisely so; and with this sole circumstance in its favour, that, being protected by the State, its mission is less likely to be interrupted, or subject either to the whims or vagaries of opposing sectarists and jarring disputants. It is because the Church of England is *established by law*, that she is able to provide a much larger amount of religious instruction for the nation at large than she possibly could do, were she subverted as an Establishment, and had to seek about, as Whitefield and Wesley are now doing, for extraneous support, and for the aid of the separatists from her communion.

*Mr. Forster.* But is there enough of universal feeling in favour of the Established Church to justify it in its assumption of the title of the *National Church*?

*Mr. Herbert.* I think she has assumed no-

thing. She has been established by the authority of national law, has the sanction of as much of the public feeling as is enlisted in these thoughtless times in favour of any religious subject, is supported by national consent, and can trace her origin to the apostles, or first founders of Christianity.

*Mr. Forster.* I do not maintain that a *National Church* must of necessity be an unrighteous institution, but I think that a church connected with the State, at least, runs the risk of losing its *spiritual* character.

*Mr. Herbert.* But, what would you think of a State without any religion? What are the histories of countries without national religions, and national forms of worship? If those who dissent from our Church were to be able to plant Christianity amongst any pagan people, would they begin by endeavouring to convert the lowest rabble, or by seeking rather to convey the truth to the understandings of the chiefs and better informed and influential of the tribe, so that their example and influence might be exerted in improving the habits, laws, and customs of the mass of the people?

*Mr. Forster.* But this would not be imposing

Christianity upon them or upon their government, but would be simply seeking to effect, by example, that which, without example, would have a slow and feeble progress.

*Mr. Herbert.* That is precisely the case with the Church of England. No one is required or compelled to be an Episcopalian, or a Churchman,\* because the State religion is of that character; but the influence and example of the Church are admirable upon the minds of the whole population.

*Mr. Forster.* I do not deny that a government has the right to acknowledge its belief in the truths of Christianity, or to proclaim that a general belief in such truths, on the part of the people, is necessary to social happiness and order; but I object to any form of Christian worship being selected by the State, and to any influence being gained by the government in its own favour, as the result of its connection with a particular church or denomination.

*Mr. Herbert.* He who wills the end, though, must surely will the means. All who are not deists or atheists, Jews or Mahometans, pagans or unbelievers, claim to be Christians; and the Socinian insists that he is a Christian, as did *Apolinaris*, who taught that Christ did

not assume a human soul, and that the flesh of Christ is consubstantial with his divinity. The *Arians* claimed to be Christians, though they maintained that Christ had only a titular honour of being called God, and that he was inferior to the Father, touching his dignity; that he was made the Son of God, not by nature, but by adoption; and that the essence of the Son was not the same as the essence of the Father, the Son being neither co-eternal nor co-equal, nor consubstantial with the Father; that the Holy Spirit was not God, but created by the Son, begotten and made by him, inferior to the Father and the Son, and co-operating with both in the work of creation. Yet these persons called themselves Christians. The *Ascetics*, with their austere discipline, mortifications; and anti-social lives, also claimed the title of Christians. So did *Beryllus*, who, in the third century, yet ventured to deny the divinity of Christ. So did the *Ebionites*, who rejected the fact of the miraculous conception, and who were the founders of what is called Unitarianism, the child of Judaism misunderstood, and of Christianity imperfectly received. In like manner, the *Eutychians* called themselves Christians, though they denied the exist-

ence of two persons in Christ, confounded his natures, and declared that there were in Christ two natures before their conjunction, but that, after the incarnation or union of the natures, there was one only. *Macedonius* also maintained he was a Christian, though he denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and affirmed him to be a power created and diffused over all creatures. *Montanism* also insisted that it was Christian, yet *Montanus*, *Priscilla*, and *Maximilla*, proclaimed themselves prophets and prophetesses. The *Nazarenes* also styled themselves Christians, though they urged the necessity for the observances of the law of Moses, and all its ceremonies, notwithstanding they admitted that the Messiah had come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. So did the *Nestorians*, though they maintained that the Virgin Mary was not DEIPARA, but rather CHRISTIPARA, and, therefore, that the son of Mary ought to be called Christ, and not God, or the Son of God. *Noetus* also proclaimed himself a Christian, though he taught that there were three distinct names and not three hypostases; that God was only one person, and therefore he concluded that the Father was born of a virgin, and suffered. In like manner, the *Patri-*

*passians* called themselves Christians, and yet they taught that the Father died upon the cross. *Paul of Samosata* also would not give up his title of Christian, though he said that Christ was a mere man, called "the Son of God" on account of his works, and the "*Word*," because he spake to us instead of God. Then the *Pelagians*, they called themselves Christians, though they opposed the fundamental doctrines of Christ's religion, the doctrines of original sin, and the necessity for Divine grace. Nor were the *semi-Pelagians* scarcely less free from error, and yet they insisted that they alone had correct views of the doctrines of Christ. *Synesius* would have been horrified not to have been looked on as a Christian, and yet, though a bishop, he was tainted with the errors of Plato and the Pythagoreans: The *Theopaschites*, who insisted that the *Divinity* of the Son was fixed to the cross, and that one of the *persons* in the *Trinity* suffered, yet looked on themselves as even *ultra-Christians*. All of these claimed to be Christians; and if the state or government of this country were simply to declare itself *Christian*, without adopting some distinct church, having its creeds, articles of religion, clergy, hierarchy, constitu-

tion, form of worship and discipline, it would be precisely the same as if it professed no religion at all ; it would be *practically* atheist.

*Mr. Forster.* But though in the earlier ages of the Christian church it might have been necessary for a Christian government to have declared to which *distinct portion* of that church it belonged, yet long before the Reformation in England all those sects to which you have referred had disappeared, and therefore there would not have been any confusion or misapprehension on that head.

*Mr. Herbert.* But though the sects and heresies of the *early* Christian church have now been forgotten, this was not the case when Christianity was first introduced into Britain ; and yet ever since then the religion of the nation has been *Episcopal*. Still, look at the sects and heresies which have been known in more modern periods of the history both of the world and of our Church. The *Anabaptists*, with their mistaken proposition that “a Christian is lord of all things, and subject to nobody.” The state could not be *Anabaptist*, for then it would have taught that *all* authority, whether ecclesiastical or civil, was mere usurpation. The *Antinomians*, who maintain that

the moral law is of no use or obligation under the Christian dispensation. The state could not be *Antinomian*, for that would have been to encourage immorality and bad conduct on the part of the people. The *Arminians*, who maintain that mankind was not totally depraved, and that depravity does not come upon them by virtue of Adam's being their public head, but that mortality and natural evil *only* are the direct consequences of his sin to posterity. The state could not be *Arminian*, for it would have been to deny one of the great incentives to holiness, *viz.* the feeling of total depravity. The *Baptists*, who exclude all children from the reception of baptism, and all adults from the reception of the Holy Communion who have not been baptized by *immersion*. The state could not be thus exclusive in its creed. All who *will*, may be baptized, whether infants or adults, and all may receive, if of good moral life, the Holy Communion. Nor is the religion of the *Greek Church* one which a Protestant state could have selected. The patriarch of the *Greek Church* is little different to the Pope. It affirms that the Holy Ghost proceeds only from the Father, and not from the Father and Son. It believes in a sort



of transubstantiation. It adopts confession, and extreme unction; allows not its clergy to make any engagement to marry after ordination; prays for the dead, holds very doubtful tenets as to hell, believes in two heavens, offers up a sort of worship to the Virgin Mary, supplicates the assistance and mediation of saints, believes in salvation by *faith and works conjointly*, abstains from eating things strangled, manifests an enthusiastic attachment for religious pictures, and holds traditions as of equal authority with the Holy Scriptures. The religion of the English state could not, then, be of the Greek Church. The *Independents*, who maintain that every particular congregation of Christians has a full power of ecclesiastical jurisdiction over its members, independent of the authority of bishops, synods, or any other ecclesiastical assemblies. The state could not be *Independent* in its religion, for that would have been to have encouraged the establishment of so many religious republics out of its sphere and influence. The *Lutherans*, who affirm the essence of transubstantiation, represent religious rites and institutions, as the use of images in churches, private confession, exorcism in the celebration of baptism, and other

Romish ceremonies, as tolerable, or even useful, certainly do not believe a religion in harmony with the Protestant convictions of the people of England. Thus, the state in this country could not be Lutheran; nor could the state in England adopt even the MORAVIAN worship and tenets; for although the constitution of their church is episcopal, yet the bishops do not possess adequate power for a national faith, and their septennial synods would introduce too much of change and uncertainty for such a system to become a *national* religion. Of *Popery* I shall say nothing. We both thank God from our hearts that we are *not* Papists. The *Quakers*, with all their orthodoxy on many points, believe that although the Scriptures are given by the inspiration of God through holy men, that they are a declaration of those things most surely believed by the primitive churches, and that they contain the mind and will of God, and are His commands to us; and in that respect are his declaratory word, and are obligatory upon us; yet, since they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor the primary rule of faith and manners;

yet, because they are a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are, and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from whom they have all their excellency and certainty. This was not, and is not the view taken of the Holy Scriptures by the vast majority of the nation; and the state, therefore, could not be of the religion of the Quakers. Their objections to taking legal oaths, to war, taxes, and to various national customs, must always prevent the religion of Penn from being that of the state. The *Socinians* are but half Christians, denying the divinity of the second person in the Trinity, and the personality of the Holy Spirit. Their religion *might* be that of a Jewish government, for the Jews might be induced to admit that J'esus Christ was an extraordinary man, but the Protestant state of England could not be Socinian. The *Methodists* are but rising sects. We as yet can form no idea of their future influence and extent, but one thing is certain, they are branches of the Church of England, with little opposed either in their doctrines or discipline to those of our Church. It is, however, self-evident, that the state could not be Methodist in its religion, for these sects are as

yet but in their fiftieth year of existence. Now then without you are prepared to maintain that the state should be Christian, without defining what it means by Christianity, you must admit that the Episcopal Church of England is really the *only* form which the state in this country could adopt, unless it had selected the Presbyteral Church of Scotland. In either case, it would have been a Christian and a Protestant religion, but in either case it would have been the state religion; and as it is to the union of the *Church* with the *State* that you object, it would not at all have removed that objection if the Church had been Presbyteral instead of Episcopal. The state religion in England, to be orthodox, Christian and Protestant, must have been one, or the other.

*Mr. Forster.* But although the state could scarcely have chosen any other form of the Christian religion than the one it has done, if it made any choice at all, why was it bound to make any choice beyond that of a belief in the Old and New Testament?

*Mr. Herbert.* Because the inhabitants of the country being not only Christians but Episcopalians, were in need of religious institutions, and of a religious organization of a national

character, or, in plain words, of a *national* religion, and national church. A nation, *as a nation*, could not have *many* religions, *i. e.* the state was obliged to believe something, or to be unbelieving. A government which has no faith, no fixed notions, no settled opinions, must exercise an injurious, instead of a beneficial influence over the minds of the people. A government of a Christian people which does no more than recognize the fact of the religious obligations of the people, and the truth of the Christian religion, but which does not, also seek to avail itself of the help of Christianity in governing man, and in promoting the happiness of the people, is not a Christian, but a deistical or even atheistical government. This choice by the *nation* of a religion, and this connection of the state with that national religion, is neither a bigoted nor an oppressive connection. When dissenters separate themselves from this national and state religion (for a national is not necessarily a state religion), they exclude themselves from the privileges which belong to its members. The nation, in the exercise of its rights, has established the *Episcopal Protestant religion* as the religion of the land, according to the forms of what is properly styled the Church of

England. When the dissenters separate from this Church they voluntarily detach themselves from the bulk of the nation; but this is no reason why the nation should be deprived of its religion, or the state of its aid and influence. The connection of the state with the Church gives moral force to the former, and promotes the influence of the latter. Thus both are benefited, none are excluded, and none are injured.

*Mr. Forster.* But would it not be possible to have a National Church without having a dominant church?

*Mr. Herbert.* What do you mean by a dominant church?

*Mr. Forster.* A church having the exclusive patronage and support of the state.

*Mr. Herbert.* Certainly not. An episcopal church could undoubtedly exist in this country without any other support than the endowments and contributions of its own members; and if the Church of England had not been robbed at the Reformation and pillaged during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, she could exist so still. But that would not constitute it a *National Church*. It would then be only an Episcopal Protestant Church. But when the

government of the country becomes Christian, Protestant, and Episcopal; when the coronation services are of this character; when the oaths taken by the monarchs and public functionaries are of the same kind; when the prayers and formularies of the Church are adopted by both houses of parliament; when the very possession of the crown and its descent depends on clear and distinct facts as to the religion of the monarch, and his family; when, in order to prevent any dispute or discussion as to what is the nature of the religion believed in, professed, and adopted by the state, the National Church and the national religion are always selected as the one to be imitated and enjoined; then how can it be otherwise than that such a religion should have the *exclusive patronage and support* of the state? The state cannot profess a multiplicity of religions. It can profess but *one*. The state cannot encourage dissent from that state religion; for that would be a solemn and dangerous mockery. The state must encourage, and support, and patronize *exclusively* that religion which it has itself adopted, and which it has so adopted *because it is also the religion of the nation*.

*Mr. Forster.* But if in process of time the

religion of the nation should change, and the majority of the people, instead of being Episcopal, should be Independent or Baptist, or of the new religions of Wesley or Whitefield, what would happen then ?

*Mr. Herbert.* Why evidently the state religion would change. The representatives of the English nation would unavoidably represent the majority : and, as a matter of course, not all at once perhaps, but in the end, the religion of the state would be in accordance with the religion of the majority of the nation ; and remember the religion of the *Court* is not always that of the state. It is possible to conceive, though not in this country, that a king may be a Papist and his people Protestant, or it is possible, even in this country, that a king may in his heart favour the views of Independents, or Baptists, or Quakers, and may not frequent the *National Church*, but this would *not* change the religion of the *state*.

*Mr. Forster.* But is it not possible for the state to support all Protestant and orthodox sects ; paying the clergy of all ? •

*Mr. Herbert.* This would be impossible ; for who would have the right to determine which were the *orthodox* and which the *heterodox*



sects? The state simply proclaims itself *Christian, Protestant, and Episcopal*, and belongs to the religion of the nation. It should not do more. It cannot do less. And as to the state supporting all Protestant and orthodox sects, the *state* does not support the Church. But a very small portion of the revenues of the Church belongs to the state, or are supplied by it. The Church was endowed by those who founded her temples, believed in her doctrines, gloried in her creeds, rejoiced in her ritual, and were attached to her hierarchy.

*Mr. Forster.* But has not the connection of the Church with the state tended to secularize the Church, and destroy its spiritual character? For instance, did not the Emperor Constantine, in his zeal for spreading Christianity, extirpate the priests and augurs of Paganism, rifle and demolish their temples, and appropriate their revenues to different purposes? Did he not set himself up as the arbiter of the controversies which had sprung up in the Church, and employ his authority to terminate the dissensions which severed and agitated its ministers?

*Mr. Herbert.* He did so; but what then? Did he or did he not effect more towards the

establishment of Christianity, as the religion of the empire, than any other human being had accomplished to that period? Allowances must be made also for the then ruder state of society, for the difference between an absolute and a constitutional monarchy, and for the good intentions of one who had, at least, at heart, the propagation of the Christian faith.

*Mr. Forster.* But would not the Christian religion have made its way, without such arbitrary injunctions and decrees as those issued by Constantine?

*Mr. Herbert.* I do not deny that it would; but the faults and failings of Constantine were overruled by God, for the prosperity and improvement of the Church. The fact is, that there is a "*jus divinum*" in the Scripture for the establishment of Christianity; the incorporation of religion is involved in the very nature of civil polity, and is necessary to the common ends and objects of all society, and essential to every system of national government; and, besides all this, the union of the state with the Church is expedient and necessary, has been proved to be so by experience, and is not only enjoined and commanded, but is most wise and useful.

*Mr. Forster.* But to whom is to be left the choice of the religion of the state?

*Mr. Herbert.* To the state itself.

*Mr. Forster.* But if the state will not choose a religion?

*Mr. Herbert.* Then it is an irreligious, immoral, weak, and morally helpless government.

*Mr. Forster.* But if the state should choose a religion which is *not* the religion preferred by the majority of the nation?

*Mr. Herbert.* Then history shows us that the state religion is soon changed; *great national majorities always accomplish great national acts*, and without commotion or uproar. If the majority of the people of this country were decidedly *Wesleyans*, do you think the Wesleys would be excluded, as they are now, from our parish pulpits? No; the real national majority is always heard and obeyed, especially in England. This national majority is Christian, Protestant, and Episcopal; and therefore it is that it is the national religion and the state religion. The Church of England is also a spiritual institution; it is an instrument in the hands of God for the preservation and communication of religious knowledge, and for the salvation

of the souls of men, which ought to be recognized as the religion of the state, and for the promulgation of which a national apparatus of means and ministers ought to be appointed. Without a publicly recognized Church Establishment, the very existence of Christianity in this country would be endangered, and the preservation of its order, symmetry, and union, on a large scale, would be *impossible*; and without a national establishment, the great bulk of this nation must inevitably remain in a state of heathenism. Religious establishments can alone, speaking humanly, meet the demands of ignorant and infidel nations; and, but for this Church in England, where would this country have been now, after the long period of our late civil wars?

*Mr. Forster.* But do you not apprehend that in process of time the sects which have existed for a long period, others just springing into notice, and others which will still rise up, will contest this alleged *national* majority, will become numerically stronger, and will then introduce a national, though perhaps not a state religion, in place of Episcopacy?

*Mr. Herbert.* I entertain no fears on this head. If Episcopacy had fallen from the time

of the Commonwealth, instead of being restored; and if either Presbyterianism, or Congregationalism, or Independency, had been established in its place, undoubtedly Episcopalians would have been badly treated, but still there would have been a state religion. There would not then have been what is termed religious equality, but there would have been irreligious persecution. Now, on the contrary, we have a Church established by law, which admits not of religious equality, but which allows not of persecution. "Equality in matters of religion is something like the squaring of the circle among our dreaming mathematicians; or like the perpetual motion among our visionary mechanics; or like the philosopher's stone among our doating alchymists; or like the inextinguishable lamp among the visionary students in the occult science." The Church will stand secure as long as Christianity and human nature shall remain just what they are, and that will be as long as human nature shall endure. If indeed the day should arrive that the numerical force of all the sectarists and enemies of the Church combined, should be superior to the numerical force of the Church of England alone, still the sectarians would be

so divided among themselves as to which should take the lead, that there would not be that *union* which would be necessary to supplant the Episcopal Church of our country.

*Mr. Forster.* And if then, at last, it should so happen, from the division of parties, that there should be neither a National nor a State religion, do you think that the nation could not be governed, or would not be Christian?

*Mr. Herbert.* To answer this question would not be difficult were I simply to refer you to history. But, I am of opinion that civil government without religion would be a dream, that society without religion would be anarchy, and that there can be no state or government recognition of religion and of Christianity, but in a distinct and intelligible, clear and precise form and shape. Brute society *may* exist and prosper without religion; but human society cannot. The world cannot be governed without the aid of religion, as all social obligation must imply religious duty. The Deity himself has employed the agency of religion for the government of mankind. A government without religion is a national atheism. All organized society requires the aid of religion to bind it together, and a religious government

implies a church. If bodies of men are to be organized into civil societies, must they not have civil laws and constitutions? And if religion be not left out of all their social compacts and intercourse, must they not have some public recognition of religious obligations? And if such societies are Christian societies and Protestant societies, must they not have some public recognition of the Christian faith? Dissent, if carried out, would deprive all human governments of the only means of governing mankind, *i. e.* of bringing the criminal inclinations of men under due subordination. Human governments must have the aid of religion; religion is not an abstract theory, but an affair of practice; religion must have her churches; those churches their temples, ministers, agents, and laws; and, therefore, a religion, to be operative on governors and governed, must be connected with the State.

*Mr. Forster.* But is not this connection unfavourable to the *spiritual* Church, and is it not open to the objection, that legalized Christianity is not Christianity at all?

*Mr. Herbert.* Certainly not. May not the moral precepts of Christianity be righteously embodied in the law of the land? May not

sion. Look at the *éclat*, noise, ordeal, ceremonies of the baptist ceremony. Spiritual pride, rancorous prejudice, a bitter spirit against the Church, are the prominent features of the Baptists as a sect. Thus, numbers adopt a formal profession of doctrine, hold a superstitious belief on baptism, and make use of a sanctimonious exterior, to hide their pride and vanity. I speak of the mass, and not of here and there some splendid departures from the general rule.

*Mr. Burton.* Your censures are indeed sweeping and general. Many dissenters are undoubtedly worldly-minded, as are Churchmen; but I deny that the natural tendency of dissenting principles, or dissenting church discipline, is to render men hypocrites, or to set hypocritical examples, or hold out inducements to hypocrisy. It is true that there are dissenting hypocrites, but so there are Church hypocrites. The severity of discipline among dissenters previous to admission to church membership, must surely be unfavourable to hypocrisy, instead of favourable. •

*Mr. Herbert.* I entirely differ with you. The whole system of dissenting education is calculated to beget a hypocritical feeling. A self-



cratical doctrines among the working classes, encouraging impertinent levity, indifference to creeds, exclusive dealing, false views of Christianity, a spirit of equality, a love of dress and display among tradespeople, and a disrespectful manner towards the established clergy.

6th. The undue pre-eminence given by dissenters to the talent of *wealth*.

7th. The hypocrisy exhibited in the meetings which take place of dissenting ministers of different denominations.

8th. A spirit of quarrelling and strife among contending sects. And,

9th. An injurious operation over the minds of Churchmen, causing them to be less satisfied with their Church; to become party men; to neglect their own church, without being regular in their attendance elsewhere; and engendering a factious spirit, instead of one of a mild, temperate, conciliating, and humble character.

These were, and are still the practical evils of dissent; but much augmented in number and violence since the period when these conversations took place, in the parish where Mr. Herbert was the curate in 1801.

The conversations which thus took place

but only of its *inefficient management*. The curate, so circumstanced, sees around him men, women, and children, little superior, either in moral character or spiritual discernment, to the inhabitants of heathen nations. He would converse with them all, reason with them, all, read to them all, and pray with them all. But, though his nights are short, and his days long; though he rises with the lark, and seldom retires to rest before the midnight hour has sounded; though he spends and is spent, health, strength, ease, comfort, and even life itself being sacrificed in the service of the Church he loves and the God he adores; he is at every morn and eve compelled, in the spirit of Christian anxiety, to exclaim, “And who is sufficient for these things?” He feels as an officer would do who, with one piece of artillery and a few muskets, should be directed by the government of his country to make an effort to capture a fort of immense size with formidable walls and ramparts. Day after day he fires on. Now and then a small breach is effected—but he cannot enter. Here and there he perceives some of the defenders of the fort cut down by the balls of his well-directed piece of artillery—but their places are soon filled up with others—and at last, worn

out with exhaustion, disappointment, and care, he sinks on the cold turf to rise no more. Thus is it with the working curate in a large parish. His church is not full, and he wishes to fill it. His sermons must be excellent, well studied, and well delivered. This takes much time, and his parishioners complain that he does not visit them as did the last clergyman. He resolves to visit them more. He does so. But his study is less frequented, his books less read, and his sermons fall off. His congregation thins, and he perceives it—and he takes to his study and diminishes his visits. But the schools of his parish require his attention; the Catechism is not so well studied or repeated as it should be, and he feels that the hope of the future, must be the youth of the present, generation. He canvasses his poor parishioners for their children, as if he were soliciting from them his daily bread. He implores them to allow their offspring to be snatched from ignorance, vice, and profanity. Some refuse; this is a source of heartfelt woe. Others acquiesce; this is a source of heartfelt joy. But then he must superintend the school, look to its classes, watch its master and mistress, catechize the children, seek to interest them in the school,

and take care that enough of means be provided to meet the expenses. In time, the school is flourishing, and his heart is right glad; but the hours daily consumed about these duties take away the portion of the day he would devote to the sick, the poor, the dying, and, above all, to those who either are led away from the Church by sectarian doctrines and tenets, or are wholly indifferent to every form or portion of Christianity. He is obliged then to give far less time to the school, and it soon declines; the parents complain, the scholars are fewer, and he hears it said, "If the clergyman would but give more time to the school and less to his books, the former would be more flourishing." To his books, indeed! Poor man, he has hardly time to study the Bible—and *never* to look into a commentary. Then there are districts far removed from his church, the boundaries of his parish, where the people live without God, without the Bible, without the Prayer-book, and without hope; and he declares, "that he must make an effort to get *at them*." He does so, but his walks are long and tedious, the other districts of the parish are necessarily less attended to, much of his time is consumed in bodily exercise simply

to get from one part of his parish to another, and as the sexton, the parish clerk, the schoolmaster, the poor, the sick, the dying, all look sorrowful at his change of system, he is obliged to centralize more than he has done, and the inhabitants on the boundary-line are much less oftener cheered by his welcome and beneficial visits. Alas ! he hears that the Papists, with their mummeries, have besieged the necessarily deserted district, or that dissenters are exclaiming against his want of attention to, and love for, the sheep of his flock. All require from him *ubiquity*, and, alas ! *ubiquity* he does *not* possess. Often as he rises in the morning he draws out his plan for the day, but his early hours become known, and he therefore has yet earlier visitors. One calls to complain, another to ask a favour, a third to seek for advice, a fourth to point out an evil, and a fifth to suggest new plans, or the following up of old ones. An hour or two are soon swallowed up by these intruders on his plans, and he is forced to change his movements and curtail his duties. Thus 'he goes on from month to month, and from year to year, whilst the dissenters and the Papists, the infidels and mere formalists of his parish, though they do not contribute one

farthing to his income, exclaim, “What is the use of paying for a clergyman, when we rarely ever see him?” At length he asks for his dismissal, seeks for a more limited sphere of action, where he shall be known, and where his influence will be felt, and is in himself a practical example of the good of the parochial system in *theory*, but of its inefficiency in *practice*, *i. e.* when large parishes are entrusted to the care and labours of *one* clergyman. In other cases, indeed, he labours on; lives in the hope of promised “help” next year; strives to effect more than God hath given to any man the strength to perform, and is laid upon a sick bed, or sinks imperceptibly—and dies from over-work and exhaustion. In such parishes, dissent is vigorous, sectarists are plentiful, and every new theory is listened to with sad avidity and followed with mournful zeal. The cure for this state of things, which was felt even in Mr. Herbert’s time, but which is yet worse in the days in which we live, has been more than hinted at in the Introduction. It is the following out the episcopal and the parochial system to its utmost extent.

In the parish in which Mr. Herbert laboured from 1780 to 1787, all these evils pressed upon

him with constantly increasing force, and the incumbent, who was an aged clergyman, with a portion of his left side paralysed, was unable to render him any other very effective assistance, even when resident there, than that of his pen. There was another evil also which deeply affected his heart, and to supply a remedy for which was the subject of his daily anxieties and prayers. It was the cold, stiff, unmeaning Churchism of nominal, but only formalist Churchmen. With Mr. Herbert, religion was every thing. With his parishioners, it was a cold, dull system of forms and ceremonies. Here and there, indeed, he could discover individuals warmed with a pure and fervent piety; but their numbers were few, and they were invariably stigmatized as fanatics, Methodists, or Puritans. To arouse them from this state of lethargy was the constant desire of his heart, and all the topics of his feeling and eloquently written sermons were selected to bear on this subject. On one occasion, in the warmth of his zeal and anxiety, he exclaimed, "I would, my brethren, that ye were Methodists, rather than Formalists." This phrase led to a representation being made to the rector: to complaints that his curate was a *Methodist himself*:

and to a correspondence between Mr. Herbert and the incumbent, which was by no means pleasing to either, and eventually led to Mr. Herbert's removal to a small agricultural cure. Seven years of incessant toil, seven years of prayers and tears for the spiritual improvement of his flock, seven years of devotedness to the interests of the Church, were not, however, lost either on the parishioners at large, or on the regular frequenters of the parish church, and the day he left was to his large district a day of fear and mourning. For those who did not agree with him, respected him; those who did not attend the church knew that he was a God-fearing man; and whilst the children loved him, the poor dwelt on his urbanity, the sick on his tenderness, and all on his kindness, conciliatory manner, and affability. •

During the residence of Mr. Herbert in this long-neglected parish, where his labours were so incessant and useful, a curious and instructive incident occurred, which demonstrated at once the evil operation of the *Mortmain Act*, and the possibility of securing once more to the Church, were that act repealed, adequate endowments by means of individual benevolence.



In the centre of his parish stood an old brick house. It had many rooms, more windows, and was inhabited by an old bachelor, whom it was the fashion to style a *miser*. In his early days a large fortune had been left him, but being crossed in love, he had determined on leading a sort of hermit life, and for many years had associated with no one but his respectable old housekeeper, and never was seen out of his own residence and garden except on Sunday morning, and then he proceeded to church, attended the service, and returned home. The active zeal and energetic manner of Mr. Herbert at first much disturbed and annoyed him; but as the life of the curate corresponded with his doctrines and belief, he in time spoke of him to his housekeeper with respect, and even, after two years' consideration, ventured once a fortnight on attending the *afternoon* service. Such a metamorphose as this was more than an eight days' wonder in that town, and Mr. Herbert, being anxious to raise a sum of twenty guineas to meet the wants of a family suddenly reduced to poverty, ventured to call on the old bachelor. The visit of the clergyman seemed at first to disconcert him; but when Mr. Herbert stated the reasons

which had induced him to call, he, who had been represented as *a miser*, placed five guineas in the hands of the applicant. In the course of the conversation the old bachelor spoke of the want of church-room of late, of his sorrow that there were not more churches than one in the town, and declared his willingness to assist in any attempt which might be made to build a new one. Mr. Herbert took leave; and in a few days afterwards was summoned to attend his death-bed. The old miser, as he had been called, was found to be a humble and sincere Christian, who, having contracted certain habits of seclusion for too long a period of his life to change them, had, when enlightened by the instrumentality of Mr. Herbert's preaching on the doctrines and duties of Christianity, his own sinfulness, and the love and merits of his Saviour, resolved on leaving to the church of his town the bulk of his fortune, with the view of promoting church extension.

When Mr. Herbert arrived the old gentleman was dying; he had been seized with an attack of apoplexy, and was only able to articulate a few words, expressive of his love to his Saviour, his reliance on him alone for salvation, his sorrow that he had been so inefficient a member

of the Church, his gratitude to Mr. Herbert for his faithfulness and zeal; and then, placing in Mr. Herbert's hands his will, which he had himself prepared a few days previously, expired. Alas! the good old bachelor prepared the will *himself*. It was technically illegal. Its bequest came within the provisions of the Mortmain Act. The validity was contested by some distant cousins of the testator, who had still considerable sums left them, and the will was declared null and void. Thus estates to the value of thirty thousand pounds, which would have built and endowed a new church, were lost to the Church of England, and a large parish, with a great population, remains even to this day with only *one* parish church. This was then, and is now, one of those practical evils which ought to, and must be remedied.

The deplorable ignorance which existed in the period to which this portion of the life of Mr. Herbert refers, and which even still exists in some of the agricultural districts in England, would hardly be credited by those who had not resided, as he had done, in those districts, and especially on the borders of Wales. In the year 1788, he was curate in a country parish in the county of Hereford, near to its Welsh fron-

tier, and in the capital of which he had received his early education. In his new curacy he found the inhabitants believing in haunted houses, ghosts, and even witchcraft.

The *Anglo-Cambrian Church* had not effected so much for the Welsh as the English Episcopal Church had for the English; and superstition was mixed up with the piety of some, and fanaticism with the religion of others. At the middle of the eighteenth century, and even to the period at which we have arrived in the history of Mr. Herbert, Wales was deplorably dark. The poor could not read. Public morals were at a low ebb. Gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness, very generally prevailed. The pulpits were badly supplied. Many of the clergy were worldly-minded and corrupt. The Sunday sport, called "*Ach-warengamp*," in which all the young men of the neighbourhood had a trial of strength, and the people assembled from the surrounding country to see their feats, was rather encouraged than repressed by the idle and inattentive portion of the clergy. In some places, particularly in summer weather, the young men and women had what they called *singing eves*, i. e. they met together and diverted themselves by singing songs in

turn to the Welsh harp, till the dawn of the Sabbath. In other places they employed the Sundays in dancing and singing to the harp, and in playing tennis. Everywhere, on the Sunday, sports were to be seen; and in summer, interludes were performed, gentlemen and peasants sharing the diversion together; whilst the "*Bobbgerdded*," or walking people, used to traverse the country, begging with impunity. The efforts of the celebrated Rev. Griffith Jones, Rev. Daniel Rowland, and Mr. Howell Harris, led indeed to a better state of things; but instead of conforming to the Church and introducing spiritual life within its walls, they became sectarians, and divided their attention between attacking the deplorable state of public morals in the principality, and attacking the Church itself. The Rev. Mr. Rowland was the apostle of Welsh Methodism, and his influence was undoubtedly prodigious. His irregularity as a minister of the Church of England was, however, generally admitted, and no discipline was possible if the Church allowed all his measures, and countenanced all his plans. On the other hand, it was not borne in mind that the churches were not numerous enough to contain more than half of the population, and, therefore, that

out-of-door preaching became more justifiable. The appointment of English bishops to Welsh bishoprics was likewise an evil. The Welsh and English characters were vastly different ; and no real fellowship could exist between people who could not speak the same language, and who constantly viewed every question from an opposing point. At the present day the evil is *partially* met, and the bishops of the Welsh Church are men to whom can be safely entrusted the spiritual interests of that portion of the British population. But dissent and, above all, Calvinistic Methodism have gained such hold of the affections of the lower orders, in consequence of the long-neglected state of the Anglo-Cambrian Church, that, both in North and South Wales, one-half of the inhabitants are separatists. Long must be the period ere this state of things can be changed ; but by degrees churches are being erected, the clergy are principally Welshmen, or well acquainted with the Welsh language, the occasional offices of the Church are more attended to, and the conduct, character, views, attainments, and spirit of the bishops are better known and more generally appreciated. This was not the case at the period when Mr. Herbert held a

cure in the county of Hereford, and absenteeism on the part of the clergy was then an evil of a most fearful and deplorable character. Since that period a knowledge of the English language has made great progress among those mountaineers; though even to this day thousands of the lower orders will reply in Welsh to any inquiry made of them in English, "*I do not understand the Saxon tongue.*"

Although the effect produced on the minds of the Welsh people by the labours of the Rev. Messrs. Griffith Jones, Daniel Rowland, and Thomas Charles, as well as by the lay exertions of Mr. Howell Harris, had been in North and South Wales decidedly favourable to the cause of Christian morals, yet a vast deal of superstition was mixed up with their faith, and a large portion of animal terror was combined with their Christian feelings. The whole system of *jumping, ranting, shaking*, had a distinct connection with their half superstitious and half christianized character; and although much of vital religion existed, under a most unpromising and even repulsive garb, yet, some notion may be formed of the strange compound of faith and superstition, terror and belief, nervous agitation and excitement, which then

generally prevailed, and which still exists to a lamentable extent, from the following episode.

On one winter evening, in the year 1789, whilst engaged with his old Welsh preceptor in acquiring, by a turf fire, a knowledge of that language, in which it was often desirable, even in his border parish, to converse, a sudden and violent knocking was heard at the door of his humble habitation. There were evidently more than one or even two persons seeking to gain admittance, and loud cries and noises in the Welsh tongue succeeded the repeated blows which had been made on the door. Mr. Herbert, at the first moment, felt some alarm, but his venerable Welsh preceptor calmed his fears by assuring him, after having listened to the conversation and demands of the assailants, that no harm was intended, and that it was only some frightened and superstitious people, who declared *that the devil had come amongst them*; and who besought Mr. Herbert, as the next neighbouring minister, to come forth to them, proceed to the spot where Satan had taken up his stronghold, and, in fact, “*to lay the devil.*” When Mr. Herbert opened the door, the night was dark, the wind moaned lowly over the border country, and the wailings



of the superstitious and unexpected band before him, well harmonized with that Æolian music. Before him stood a tall, commanding woman, who appeared to be the leader of the party. She was clad in the Welsh cloak and hat, carrying in her hand a stick, of the dimensions of a bludgeon, to defend herself from satanic attacks, and even to rattle down the door of Mr. Herbert's cottage, should such a proceeding be necessary to gain admittance. Her features were masculine; her eyes, as she entered the parlour, and as they became more clearly visible, expressed by their vivid glances all the agitation of which she was a real victim; and she repeated with a rapidity hardly human, in the broadest Welsh ever yet spoken, "*that the devil had* come amongst them to destroy them." She was the chief spokeswoman. Behind her, half-crouching, beneath the weight more of his terror than his years, was an old and bent-down man. He shivered, not with cold, but with trepidation, and every limb, muscle, nerve, was deeply and severely suffering. He did little more than weep. The strong, brawny being who was before him was his daughter; and at his side stood, or rather knelt, his alarmed and almost paralyzed wife. She

stretched her feeble arms towards heaven; repeated over and over again, at the top of a shrill and most unmusical voice, "Glory to God in the highest!" as an expression of gratitude for protection in a minister's dwelling from the further attacks of Satan, and only interspersed her cries by sobs for herself, her husband, and her children. A young loon, of about twenty years of age, with long, sandy hair, looking the very picture of despair, and turning round every second to stare with wild horror behind him, as though by no means satisfied that the devil had not taken possession even of the curate's dwelling, and who was the son and brother of the other characters, rendered the picture at once striking and sad. He was the object of the special notice of his parents and sister, the former looking compassionately, and the latter somewhat fiercely upon him.

When the first quarter of an hour of screaming, weeping, sobbing, and alarm had passed away, Mr. Herbert attempted to ascertain the cause of this emotion, and sought to pacify his noisy, and by no means welcome guests. Although his knowledge of the Welsh language was far from sufficient to enable him to under-

stand the whole of the details of this surprising and tragic scene, yet he perfectly comprehended that they all firmly believed that the devil had taken possession of the cottage, as he had done once before, in the time of Daniel Rowland, of the cottage of Evan Davies; and that as that good man had succeeded in “laying the devil,” by prayer, by fasting, and certain magical influences he possessed over Satan, they hoped the English curate would, though a Saxon, be able to afford them the same aid. At any rate they were all convinced that Satan would not dare to follow them into a clergyman’s residence, and had made up their minds rather to wander barefoot for ever, over mountain and moor, begging their morsel of bread from the charity of the poor as well as from the mercy of the rich, than return to their satanically-inhabited cottage, without the devil should have first been most assuredly and unquestionably “*laid*.” Mr. Herbert at length obtained a hearing, and his faithful interpreter made these agitated and horrified beings understand, that the curate must have a calm and deliberate recital of all that had transpired, and of their reasons for apprehending that Satan had got possession of their

tenement. “Let *me* speak, and be ye all silent!” exclaimed the strong, masculine woman, who had first entered, and who was the eldest daughter; and rising from the ground, on which she had been sitting, in an attitude of mournfulness and despondency, during the last few minutes, she stood with the bludgeon grasped with hideous horror in her right hand, as her left laid hold of her terror-struck brother.

“Not a word, father. Not a cry, mother. Not a shudder, Griffith,” she commanded, with the air rather of a witch than a prophetess, and of one used to direct, rather than to obey.

“It was last Sabbath evening, the very last we have seen, and perhaps the last we may ever see, that we heard Morgan Jones preach at the chapel on the mountain; we were all present. He was in this part of the country, and, hearing of the strange doings and bad ways of men hereabouts, he took for his text the 16th verse of the 8th chapter of Matthew, ‘When the even was come they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils.’ He begun his sermon by telling us, what is too clear to be denied, that we were all *devilish* in our tastes, wills, desires, appetites, and lives; that the *devil* went about like a roaring lion,

seeking whom he might devour ; that in former times, he was permitted to devour men, women, and children *naturally*, as well as spiritually, but that now his efforts were confined to *spiritual* attacks, though still he took human shapes. ‘ I remember,’ said he, ‘ a case of a young maiden in Cardiganshire, to whom the devil appeared in the shape of her lover, and he tempted her to suicide. She murdered herself. I remember another case, in Pembrokeshire, of a young man to whom the devil appeared in the form of a serpent, tempting him as Eve was tempted, but to kill the maiden to whom he was betrothed, and he killed her.’ ‘ Sometimes,’ said he, ‘ the devil comes in the form of a sin, sometimes of a virtue or a grace, sometimes in the form of a sermon, when the Gospel is not preached by our English bishops, and sometimes when it is not preached too by a Whitefieldite preacher. Sometimes people have told me, and right good people too, that they have seen the devil and vanquished him ; whilst all those who resist the Word of God, as preached in *our* chapels, may be sure that, sooner or later, the devil will take possession of their cottages, their cattle, their farms, their children, themselves, and they will be like

those poor people who were brought, when the even was come, to Jesus, all possessed of devils.' So he went on, and on, and on, till not one of us could move, and we all shivered before his voice, as does the thistle before the blast of the north wind. But all of a sudden he said, 'Let us chase the devil; devil, devil, we will chase thee;' and for two hours we chased the devil by our songs and hymns, by our cries and prayers, by our jumping and shaking, and wrestling and trembling; and Morgan Jones (and may the Lord bless him!) told us at last *to be of good courage*, for that the devil by this time was chased, and had gone over the mountains. When he said this, there was such a scream of delight and joy, that I never heard before in my life, and now never expect to hear again, till the angels shall cry with rapture when he shall be cast into the bottomless pit. But before we all separated, and before Morgan Jones took leave of us to go over to Glamorgan, he stood up in the very midst of us, and said, 'If any persons who now hear me will not *now* turn to God, will not *now* repent, will not *now* come to the penitent stool, *before Tuesday night shall be over* the devil will get possession of their hearts, their cattle, their farms, their

cottages, their servants, themselves, poor and rich, Church, Methodist and all, children, fathers, mothers, wives, husbands; and ye will then be in the condition of those who were brought unto Jesus at even, possessed with devils.' Father, mother, and self, cried for mercy, and went to the penitent stool; but Griffith would not, he said he *would not*."

"No, no," interrupted Griffith, who stood by her side, and now saw plainly that *he* was about to be represented as the *sole* cause of the disasters of his family, "I did not say I *would not*, I said I *COULD not*."

"Well, Griffith," demanded his fierce and fiery assailant, "but what did Morgan Jones say to you in reply? Did he not say '*could*' not, meant '*would*' not, and that all '*could* who *would*?'"

"He did, he did, that's true," replied poor Griffith, on whose shoulder the left arm of his awful sister was still placed with an oppressive weight, and yet nervous trembling; "but did I not reply to him, 'You may as well tell the snows of Snowden to melt in December, as my cold heart to melt without the Spirit?'"

"Yes, Griffith, you did so—to your horror be it repeated; but what did Morgan Jones reply?"

“He told me that the Spirit was there, but that I refused it; which I did not believe to be the truth, and I left the chapel.”

“Yes, yes, yes,” screamed his giant sister, “you left the chapel—without a blessing, without the Spirit; you turned your back on the man of God, and the devil hath taken possession of you, of the cottage, of us all.”

“But did not *you* go on the very next day, Monday, to a dancing and a music shop, sister?” asked the brother, in a tone which denoted that in his opinion the inconsistency of his sister’s conduct was quite as likely to have drawn upon them the visitation with which they had been afflicted, as his refusal to go to the penitent form at the mountain chapel; “and did you not entice your mother and your father to go with you? and whereas you were at the chapel till near midnight on the Sunday, were you not all dancing, and drinking, and carousing last night, till two of the morning had struck, before you were all in your beds, sister?”

“So much the worse for us all,” replied his yet more agitated sister. “But, as Morgan Jones told us, when once the devil gets into a house at one door, he will soon get possession



of all the rooms. You brought him into the house on Sunday night; and whilst we were dancing and drinking yesterday, he took possession of all the rooms!"

"I am a great sinner," said Griffith, "and I know it, and am not surprised at what has followed; but the blame is as much to be put on your shoulders as on mine; and it was only to put you and the English curate right on this head, that I interrupted you."

"But when did the devil come amongst you—when did you see him—where is he?" asked Mr. Herbert, with some impatience, and a great deal of incredulity.

"I will tell you, Sir, I will tell you," said the sister; "but, Griffith, not another word."

Griffith assured her she should not again be interrupted; for that she was a far better speaker than he was, as he knew right well; but that he could not bear *all* the blame thrown upon him, without speaking a word for himself.

"So you see, Sir," continued the sister, looking at Mr. Herbert, and watching with deep anxiety every movement of his features, "the words of Morgan Jones have come true, and the devil has got possession of us all. For,

about two hours ago, as we were sitting round the fire, between sleep and wakefulness, all the doors flew open, a mighty rushing wind set in upon us, our little fire was blown in every direction, the dog howled as never a dog in these parts howled before, the stools were blown down, not a bit of light could be seen, and we all of us heard the devil walk over our heads, and then in the midst of us, laughing at our misery and mocking at our tears."

"You forgot to tell what became of the sheep," said the father.

"They were penned up at night-fall," said the daughter, "but they are not now to be found."

"The dog, too," said the mother.

"Yes, Sir, he has refused to come with us. Formerly so faithful and loving, he would not go with those possessed of the devil."

"The old harp, too," said Griffith.

"Yes, to be sure; all the strings are broken: broken, broken, broken! and father's harp, on which we've heard so many a tune, is now the devil's harp."

"Oh, horrible!" exclaimed the mother; "my poor old David's harp become the harp of the

devil;" and the hot tears of no affected grief ran down her aged cheeks.

"But who saw the devil?" asked Mr. Herbert, with some curiosity and interest.

"None of us saw him with our *mortal* eyes," said the giant sister; "but we all *heard* him, all *felt* him, and all *saw* him *with our hearts*."

"My poor little cottage," sobbed the old man, "is now the abode of the devil."

"The sheep," said the mother, "are, like the poor swine in the Gospel, possessed by devils."

"Never mind the sheep, mother," said Griffith, "if we could but get the harp once more; for there's many such sheep to be had in the world, but there's but *one* such harp."

"Poor Griffith," said the old man; "you are a loving son, to think so much of your father's harp in such times as these."

"But can you *lay the devil*, English gentleman?" asked the giant daughter. "Can you *lay the devil*, Sir? Can you go *at once* with us and lay him, as Morgan Jones could do, I am sure, if he were here? Does *your* religion, Sir, enable you to *lay the devil*? I've heard you are a good man, preach true things, and love

good people ; but *can you lay the devil?* and *will you lay him, too?*”

There was an imploring earnestness, and a superstitious, but solemn conviction in her manner, when she said this, that made even Mr. Herbert thrill with horror. Whilst truth commanded him to seek to convince these mistaken beings that they were labouring under a superstitious feeling, which had been favoured by the half-convictions of unenlightened consciences, and by some meteoric or natural causes, which, at that hour of a dark, winter night, could not possibly be explored, he felt that he must gain their confidence and restore them to calmness, before he could hope to obtain the object he desired. So he humoured their weaknesses, assured them that in the morning he would accompany them to their cottage, offered them lodging for the night, prayed with them with much of fervour and love, and provided them with refreshment and beds, two at his house, and the other two at the cottage of his Welsh preceptor.

The next morning, though somewhat more calm, they persisted in their previous statements, and urged Mr. Herbert to proceed to the cottage, and behold with his own eyes the

devastation to which this satanic possession had led. In vain did he urge them to accompany him. Under his roof they felt safe. When compelled to remove from it, they still proposed to wander to some distant part of the country, and at last, when Mr. Herbert and his preceptor started on their singular expedition, the giant sister "begged them to see if her great grandfather's bible, which was the oldest one in that part of the country, had been destroyed by the devil;" whilst Griffith modestly asked, "if they thought it would be *possible* to get the rest of the harp from out of the devil's possession?"

On arriving at the cottage, the scene of disorder was indubitable. Casement windows were broken, chairs and tables were overthrown, the strings of the harp were shrivelled, the doors were all open, and already a few neighbouring peasants were collecting to see if similar disasters had happened to that cottage, which had occurred in a smaller degree to their own. The "*diabolical possession*" was soon explained; a sort of whirlwind had run along the pass, in the neighbourhood of which this and a few other cottages were situated; the sheep, liberated from their fold by the

whirlwind having removed the door, had fled to the mountains in horror and alarm; the dog, perceiving they had fled, had gone to watch them, by no means anxious to remain at the cottage where the whirlwind had so alarmed him; the harp-strings had been broken by the same meteoric causes, and the rest of the evils were traceable to the sole source of so much confusion. The noises over head were occasioned by the falling of objects scattered by the whirlwind; the laughing, which they fancied they heard, by the rushing of the winds through the chinks and openings of doors and windows, together with the noise of the wind without their poor tenement; and these were all exaggerated, misrepresented, and changed in their character, by the superstitious and half-awakened consciences of ignorant, but excited fanatics. The scenes of the Sunday night, and the excitement they then experienced, they mistook for religious sentiment, and the piety of the heart; the rioting and worldly-mindedness of the Monday had wearied their frames, as the excitement and fanaticism of the Sunday had disturbed their moral condition. Tuesday evening arrived. Their minds were influenced by contending

feelings. Their consciences were half-awakened to their inconsistency. Their bodies, wearied and exhausted, were half-asleep. The prophecy of Morgan Jones, which he had uttered in a spiritual sense,—meaning, that if on Monday they returned to the world and its vanities, the impressions of that Sunday night when he was preaching, would be forgotten before Tuesday was over, and the devil would have got possession of their hearts,—they had interpreted *literally*, and as meaning an actual and *bonâ fide* diabolical possession of their persons and habitations. In like manner, when he had said that the devil had appeared to persons in such and such forms, meaning that the devil tempted men through various channels and agents, they had interpreted it *literally*; and thus these poor creatures, excited by fanatical scenes, and uninstructed in pure, rational, and evangelical views of religion, had become wild with apprehension, and almost mad with horror. They had heard before of demoniacal power and satanic visits, and they now believed them all.

The sequel of the history is soon told. Mr. Herbert induced two of the cottagers, to whom similar disasters had happened that same night, and one of whom was a Christian of acknow-

ledged and signal piety, to return with him to his residence, that they might confirm him in his views and statements, and induce the ejected and dejected family to believe him. They did so with great reluctance and trepidation; returned early in the afternoon to their disordered abode; arranged their dwelling; and were *gradually* brought to see and feel, that religion does not consist either in ranting, jumping, or shaking, but in a knowledge of and sorrow for sin, in true repentance, faith, hope, and love, and in the sanctification of the heart and life by and through the influence of the Holy Spirit. As Mr. Herbert advanced in his knowledge of the Welsh language, his visits to these cottagers became more frequent, and he was ever regarded by them as the “*good English pastor.*” The character of the giant sister became by degrees sensibly changed to all who knew her; Griffith was at last one of the very best young men in the parish; and the aged couple some years afterwards sunk to rest in the arms of their faithful children, to enjoy for ever the love and smiles of their Saviour and their God.

The present state of the Anglo-Cambrian Church is greatly more satisfactory than it



was at the close of the last century. Much more attention is paid to the spiritual wants of the people. Many more churches have been and are continually erected. The clergy are more adapted to the Welsh people. The style of preaching, as well as the language, are in harmony with the wants and modes of thinking of the nation. The bishops are most attentive to their clergy. The people feel that they form part of one British family. There is a great deal more of union between the lay and clerical members than formerly existed; and, though much still remains to be done ere the Welsh will be brought back to the fold of the Anglo-Cambrian Church, yet there is every reason to hope that *by degrees* this mighty good *may be* accomplished. Still, large parishes are left, without adequate spiritual aid; still, the clergy have to walk or ride over immense and widely-scattered districts; still, the bishoprics are unequally arranged and apportioned; and still, the livings are too poor for men of talent, learning, education, and piety. Take the following specimens of largely-populated Welsh parishes, with but one or two parish churches, and generally most insufficient incomes:—

# WELSH CHURCH EXTENSION REQUIRED. 331

<i>Parish.</i>	<i>Value.</i>		<i>Population.</i>	<i>Churches.</i>
Cardiff.....	£260	.....	6,187	..... 2
Swansea.....	291	.....	14,931	..... 1
Llanbadarn Vawr	135	.....	9,824	..... 1
Aberystwith.....	265	.....	4,128	..... 1
Llandilo Vawr...	243	.....	5,149	..... 1
Llanelly .....	96	.....	7,646	..... 2
Llanidloes.....	151	.....	4,189	..... 1
Llansamlet .....	94	.....	3,187	..... 1
Llanvihangel ...	221	.....	3,576	..... 1

Eight out of nine of the incumbents have no other preferment.

Whilst, then, much has been done, a vast deal remains to be effected for the Anglo-Cambrian Church, and for its faithful and sincere members. Episcopacy is as suited to the Welsh as it is to the English, for the *doctrines* of the Welsh Methodists are those of the Thirty-nine Articles taken in a Calvinistic sense; their *discipline* consists of a monthly synod for each county, and of a general assembly, which meets quarterly, and alternately in North and South Wales; and the Rev. Mr. Charles, of Bala, an unbeneficed clergyman, may be regarded as their *founder*. If more and constant attention be paid to the wants and feelings, interests and peculiarities, of the Anglo-Cambrian Church, it may become one of the most important arms of the Church of England.

The state of the Welsh bishoprics is also deserving attention. Look at the *diocese of St. Davids*, embracing the archdeaconries of St. Davids, Brecon, Carmarthen, and Cardigan, with their eighteen deaneries, and their nearly five hundred churches. What is the income of the bishop? £2,500 per annum! It is *impossible* that any one man, and with such an income, can take the oversight of five hundred churches with any degree of efficiency and power. Impossible!

The year 1791 was one of no inauspicious character to Mr. Herbert, for he saw himself promoted to a London curacy of a moderate-sized parish, and became attached to the lady who afterwards, for nearly thirty years, was his companion, friend, solace, and wife. In a city parish, not far removed from the London side of the old bridge, he was appointed to officiate, and whilst his duties were small, his income was sufficient, when added to his private fortune and that of his wife, to enable him to live with comfort, to relieve the sufferings of the poor, to receive the visits of the middling and even upper classes, and to make himself widely useful in his new and important career. Miss Emma Jones was the daughter of a respectable

merchant, attached to business, and delighting in occupation. Mr. Jones inhabited the city, attended to the parochial duties which devolved on him as one of the most respected of the inhabitants, was most punctual in his attention to Church affairs, persevering in his opposition to all dissenting encroachments, regular in his attendance at the parish church, and more zealous for forms and ceremonies than he was for the weightier and more important matters of the law. The former, indeed, he ought to have done, but not to have left the others undone. As there are multitudes of members of the Established Church who still pay more attention to what the Church herself regards as of *secondary* importance, than they do to the all-important matters of the salvation of their own souls and those of their families, friends, and fellow-parishioners, it may not be either unwise or unimportant to pause for a few moments, and contemplate the description of characters to whom Mr. Jones and his family belonged.

To be a *Churchman*, does not *necessarily* imply that the individual is a sincere Christian. To be a *Churchman*, is not, therefore, sufficient either to secure the love of God in time, or

happiness with him throughout eternity. Yet there was in Mr. Jones's time, as there is now, a class of persons who, resembling the dissenting formalists in their regular attention to *mere forms* and ceremonies, are quite satisfied with the knowledge that they are *Churchmen*; and as they belong to the *National* religion, and therefore are not chargeable with the sin of *schism*, are entitled, they think, to hope that when they exchange the shadows of time for the realities of eternity, unceasing happiness will be their portion. They are regular in their attendance at church; receive the sacrament three or four times every year; observe the ordinances of the Church during Lent; bow most reverently to the altar; are generous in their Easter offerings; know the Prayer-book nearly by heart; would not enter a conventicle for any sum of money which could be offered them; declare "that the Church is perfect, and that God is a God of *boundless mercy*," as though he had no other attribute; frequent theatres, card-tables, races, and all the pleasures and amusements of those who never attend church at all, and throw off all religion; and yet pride themselves on their good deeds, declare that "they never did any one any

injury," and that "their religion consists in doing to others as they would be done unto." To this class of "Churchmen," as they call themselves, the family of Mr. Jones belonged, when first Mr. Herbert undertook the cure of the city parish in which they resided. Accustomed to hear sermons on the histories of Joseph and his brethren, of Balaam and his ass, of Samson and the lion, of Elijah and the children, of the widow and the cruse of oil, of the good Samaritan, on the parables of the New Testament, *unspiritualized*, and on the duties of patience, humility, almsgiving, and other good works; the family of the Jones's, as well as the rest of the parishioners, were at first startled and almost horrified at the new style of preaching of Mr. Herbert. The *first* sentence he ever uttered in the pulpit of his new parish, to which he was appointed by a new rector, who entertained opinions similar to his own, but was unable from illness to attend to his duties, were "*My brethren*, I am come amongst you to preach the Gospel, and to declare, in the language of *our Church*, that they are to be had accursed, that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he profeseth, so that he be diligent to frame his

life according to that law and the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved. This is the language of the Church. Hear it !”

“Such language as this,” said Miss Emma Jones, as she returned with her father to their city residence, “is quite at variance with all I have ever heard ; and either poor Doctor James (the late rector) was wrong in *his* views, which I cannot bring myself to believe, or this new curate of ours is grievously in error.”

“I am afraid he belongs to the *Methodist* party,” replied Mr. Jones ; but, with his usual good temper, he added, “Still we must not condemn the gentleman on first hearing, but see what he has to say to us next Sunday.”

Mr. Herbert had heard from the parish clerk and churchwardens that his *first* sermon, on obtaining salvation *only* through the name and merits of Christ, had offended some, piqued the attention of others, and startled all. Resolved, with the blessing of the Holy Spirit on his labours, to make his parishioners something more than *mere* Churchmen in theory, but to make them Churchmen in heart and soul, that is Christian, converted, saved Churchmen, he

began his sermon the next Sunday as follows : —“ *My brethren*, the condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith, and calling upon God ; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have a good will.”

Mr. Jones was now as much startled as his daughter, and as the rest of his fellow-parishioners; but as Mr. Herbert was eloquent, argumentative, and evidently thoroughly convinced of the truth of his own statements, there was a feeling of curiosity excited amongst all classes as to “ what would come next,” and the third Sunday the church was crowded.

“ *My brethren*,” said Mr. Herbert, “ original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth *always* contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every



person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

This was strong language. His sermon was its exposition. And when, towards its close, after recapitulating the substance of these 'his *three* first sermons among them, he said, "I have heard, my brethren, that it hath been said that I am no Churchman; that I am a Methodist; that I come to preach dissenting doctrines among you; and that I do not hold the Articles of my Church; but let me tell you, ye who pride yourselves on your Churchman-like characters, knowledge, and attachment, that my sermons have been based on the 18th, 10th, and 9th Articles, to be found in *all* your Prayer-books;" there was such a rush to the Prayer-books, such turning over of pages, and such an examining of those *three* Articles, that a scene more impressive or curious was seldom witnessed. "Yes, my brethren," he added, "this is the language of the *Church*, of the church in heaven, of the church on earth, of the Church of England, and of the church of Christ."

This "*new doctrine*," for still it was called so during several months, beat the formalism of mere Christian ethics or morals quite out of

the field ; many dissenters abandoned their city meeting-houses, semi-pelagianism was routed, the church soon filled with praying hearers, and the family of the Jones's were converted from the will worship and cold forms of a *nominal* churchism, to the real Christian, vital religion of the "*Articles*" of the Church of England. Some, indeed, were offended. They felt that they must give up the world with its sins, its pleasures, its enticements, its vanities, its dissipations, and its baubles, or that they must renounce hearing the sermons of the new curate. To adopt the former course would have cost them too much of self-love, and self-gratification, and so the old parish church was abandoned, and the curate anathematized as a Wesleyan or a Whitefieldite. But their places were soon filled up ; the fame of the new curate spread far and wide, and the old church, which for half a century had never been warmed by even the appearance of a middling congregation when cold morals were repeated to sleepy and uninterested hearers, now became crowded with listening and converted auditors, who loved their Church more and more in proportion as they became acquainted with it, and rejoiced

that they belonged to her communion and were saved in her bosom.

These will *always* be the effects of what may properly be styled “*Gospel preaching.*” For it is the preaching of *the Gospel* in opposition to the preaching of *sacred history*, to the preaching of mere isolated and *interesting facts*, of *morals* without faith, of *works* as the means of salvation, and of speculations instead of verities. In some churches in England this substitution of old for the new dispensation, this semi-pelagianism, this futile attempt to assist in one’s own salvation, as though Christ were unable to save us without our aid, still continues; but the number of such preachers yearly diminishes, and the clergy of the Establishment, whether Arminians or Calvinists, in the ordinary acceptation of those terms, preach Christ and Him crucified as the only basis of the sinner’s hope, and the only source of the sinner’s joy. Dissent has no longer an excuse, for the Gospel is preached in our churches.

Mr. Herbert found no difficulty in prevailing on Miss Jones to accept the heart and hand of an able, wise, pious, and devoted curate. Her father at that time was engaged in some ex-

tensive but doubtful speculations which, if they proved successful, would enable him to settle a considerable fortune on his daughter, and if otherwise, would still not prevent him from securing to her competency, though not wealth. The marriage of Mr. Herbert was celebrated without pomp or splendour, and when the wealth of his father-in-law was afterwards diminished by a failure in his foreign operations, he had not to regret the disappointment of his hopes, or to make any alterations in his modest, but yet gentlemanly household. He never borrowed money on personal annuities, or had to deposit his clerical title-deeds with usurers or Jews. We should be delighted to record that this could be said of *every* member of his profession.

The death of the incumbent, and the difference which existed between the views and opinions of the new rector and those of the late one, led, in 1799, to the removal of Mr. Herbert from his city cure. This was a source to him of no ordinary grief, for he left those who owned him as the instrument in the hands of God in their conversion, for scenes far less propitious, and for a district adjoining the metropolis, where dissent had reared its head, and threatened little short of Church de-

struction. Impotent, indeed, were its threats : but the Protestant Dissenter's Magazine had excited discussions which were injurious to peace, and unfavourable alike to Church and to dissent. Mr. Herbert soon found that 'his post was no sinecure. The parish was large, and yet there was but one parish church. The population was constantly increasing in consequence of the arrival of the middling classes from the eastern end of London, who hastened to enjoy a purer air and the luxuries of green fields and small gardens. But church-room was wanting, and as the Church would not supply the deficiency, dissent erected its meeting-houses, and enticed to its pews those who could find no accommodation in the temple of the National faith. Mr. Herbert made every imaginable effort to obtain church-room; his efforts were encouraged and backed by the vicar, and he had the satisfaction, before he left this cure, of seeing a commodious chapel of ease duly consecrated and opened to Episcopal service. But for his untiring zeal and never-ceasing efforts, that object would not have been accomplished, and the dissenters opposed it, not, indeed, with all the bitterness which now characterizes their proceedings, but

with more enmity and anxiety than they would have evinced had Popery sought to erect a chapel in the midst of them. The erection of the chapel of ease gave rise to hostile speeches and sermons on the part of the dissenting teachers, to the publication of pamphlets, to exhortations to dissenters not to leave their meeting-houses even to listen to the eloquent and evangelical doctrines of the new curate, and, finally, to a challenge on the part of one of the leaders of the dissenting body, addressed to Mr. Herbert, to hold a public conversation on the objections made by dissenters to the Church of England. The challenge thus made was accepted. The preliminary arrangements were made. No conversation was to last longer than two hours. No signs of applause were to be given by the friends of either side. No person was to be admitted without a ticket; and as the room could hold two hundred individuals, Mr. Herbert was to have the distribution of half the tickets amongst his friends and acquaintances, whilst the other half belonged to Mr. Burton, his dissenting opponent. • The expenses of hiring the room, fire, lights, &c., were to be paid by a collection to be made at the close of the series of conversations, and

extracts from the Church prayers were to be read at the *commencement* of each conversation, and an extempore prayer to be offered up by the dissenting minister at the close. During sixteen evenings these discussions were conducted, and were all taken down in shorthand; but as it would be impossible to report the whole, as their length would extend this volume to many thousand pages, and as these conversations, though proposed in 1800, did not actually take place till 1801, specimens of two of the most interesting will be inserted, according to date, in their proper place—the next chapter.

It may, perhaps, excite some surprise that Mr. Herbert, or rather his father, and father-in-law, had not, together or separately, *purchased him a living*, and thus provided him with the means of permanent usefulness in one *constant* sphere of benevolent and gracious usefulness. With respect to his father, however, when his patrimony was divided amongst a numerous family, there was by no means a sum adequate for such an arrangement, and Mr. Herbert afterwards had most *serious objections* to any purchases or measures which were, in his view, shamefully *simoniacal* in their cha-

racter. He knew that in 1547 all simoniacal presentations were visited with severe penalties. He knew that subsequently the difficulty which had existed of finding persons who might be willing to enter into the ministry, and who were able to fulfil its duties, had been greatly augmented by the extreme poverty to which the clergy were generally reduced. He knew the source of that poverty, and that it arose chiefly from impropriations and alienations which had been carried on to a dreadful extent, and which at the middle of the sixteenth century had by no means been effectually prevented. But he also knew that the loss of those offerings customarily made at shrines, and of the fees paid for the performance of ecclesiastical duties in the parish, had in no small degree contributed to the same end. This latter cause was particularly injurious, since the benefices in large towns chiefly depended on this source of revenue; and those places where the efficiency of the clergyman was of the most importance had no means of supporting the incumbent. To all these causes, added also to the then ignorance of the clergy and the superstition which reigned at the universities, he attributed the simonia-



cal contracts of corrupt patrons, who sought not for those who could preach learnedly, but for those who could pay largely. The poverty of the Church in the early part of the reign of Elizabeth was excessive, not only among the higher clergy, who were exposed to robbery from the court, but among the lower and laborious individuals who possessed no dignified station, and had no further worldly prospect than to provide bread for themselves and their families. At that moment, when, from being allowed to marry, they required greater incomes than before, the revenues of the Church were labouring under a great depression, attributable to a combination of several causes. The wholesale alienation of Church property, which had taken place in the reign of Henry VIII., had unsettled the minds of the nation with regard to all tenures; *might* had legally been converted into *right*, and all men were ready to take advantage of the change. The court invaded the wealth of the higher clergy, and they, in their turn, were often little careful of the interests of their successors, and sometimes raised a revenue by appropriating to themselves the income which was originally granted for the officiating incumbent. Where the law did

not strictly interfere, it was not at all likely that *lay patrons* would be very scrupulous as to the person to whom they committed the cure of souls, and it was truly said, “patrons now-a-days search not the universities for a most fit pastor, but they post up and down the country for a most gainful chapman ; he that hath the biggest purse to pay largely, not he that hath the best gifts to preach learnedly, is presented.” To this may be added the loss sustained through the discontinuance of fees and offerings, which were made by the laity to the curates of these parishes ; for in all times the working clergy have been treated the worst, and fared the hardest. Oblations made at shrines, the profits arising from pilgrimages, mortuaries, and personal tithes, or the tenth of all men’s clear gains, had, in turns, formed a considerable source of income to the clergy ; these payments had now ceased, but the government had been far from interposing to supply the deficiencies. The courtiers joined with the Puritans in attacking the Church ; the latter to depress its power, the former to share in the spoil, and to render the clergy beggars, in order that they might depend on them. So great was the poverty in the Church during the reign of Elizabeth, that

Archbishop Parker inhibited Grindal from holding a visitation of the London clergy (at which fees, procurations, and synodals are paid to the bishop), *because they had scarcely wherewith to buy food and raiment.* And Grindal, in his letter to Elizabeth, says, “so that at this day, in mine opinion, where one church is able to yield sufficient living for a learned preacher, there are at the least *seven* churches *unable* to do the same; and, in many parishes of your realm, where there be seven or eight hundred souls (the more is the pity), there are not eight pounds a-year reserved for a minister.”

As all this was known to Mr. Herbert, he apologized for the *early* existence of *simony*, or of simoniacal arrangements, since, as the best livings belonged to lay patrons, and as the government left the Church in its poverty, unprotected and unprovided for, it was not to be wondered at that, with such royal and government examples before their eyes, unprincipled lay patrons should seek for purchasers of their livings, and look to the wealthiest, and not the most moral or religious, as purchasers. But this state of things had now happily changed, and though the Church still remained with inadequate revenues, and badly allotted incomes,

in consequence of the robberies which had taken place of her endowments, yet Church patronage had gradually got into far better hands, and the clergy had become more learned, more virtuous, and more pious. In no case, and under no circumstances, could he then tolerate the purchase and sale of Church revenues and endowments, and resolved to wait until his own merits and usefulness should, through the providence of God, assure to him some post in the Church where he might be permanently engaged. He was not, however, ignorant of the fact that such promotion he had no right to expect, since he belonged to that then small section which exploded the old style, habits, modes of thinking, speaking, and preaching of the *dry moral school*, and addressed himself with energy and zeal to the consciences of his hearers, on their own depravity and helplessness, on their original corruption, on the total worthlessness, as a *means* of salvation, of all good works, and on the necessity for justification by grace through faith, and that not of man or his doings, but of God, and his mercy, through Jesus Christ. The preaching of these doctrines often exposed him to ridicule or to suspicion, to contempt.

or hatred, but he persevered in his course, neither joining the fanatical enemies of the Church, who preferred libelling to amending her, who devoted themselves to attack rather than to improve her; nor courting the approbation of those who thought that the *ne plus ultra* of piety was to fast in Lent, give offerings at Easter, repeat weekly the Litany, and take the sacraments on the great feast days of the National religion. But, though his conduct and principles kept him from enjoying the advantages of disinterested patronage, they also restrained him from *simoniacal* arrangements, and stimulated him to increasing efforts for the Church which he loved, and for that religion which was dearer to his heart than his life-blood, as to it he owed all his happiness in time, and all his bright and glorious prospects for another world.

## • CHAPTER VII.

**PUBLIC CONVERSATIONS ON SOME OF THE OBJECTIONS TO THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHURCH, AND ON THE PRACTICAL EVILS OF DISSENT—ADVANTAGES OF DISCUSSIONS—PHALANX OF SOCINIANS AND INFIDELS—MATERIALISM AND A YOUNG SUICIDE—THE CHURCH SOCIETIES—THE BIBLE SOCIETY—CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY—PRAYER-BOOK AND HOMILY SOCIETY—SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL—A NORTHERN CURACY—THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND—SCOTCH DISSENTERS—SCOTCH DISSENTING BIGOTRY—LORD SIDMOUTH'S BILL—A LARGE LONDON PARISH—A DISSENTING CHURCHWARDEN, AND HIS DEFEAT—MRS. HERBERT'S ILLNESS AND DEATH.**

It was in the months of January and February, 1801, that the public conversation took place between Mr. Herbert, on behalf of the Church of England, and Mr. Burton, as the advocate and representative of multiform dissent, to which reference was made in the last chapter. The hour of meeting was seven in the evening; every one of the two hundred tickets were immediately distributed, and, with but few exceptions, the individuals who attended at the first went through the whole course,

with pleasure and profit. It would be impossible to do more than supply specimens of two of those conversations, and the first we shall select was one which took place on the *popular objections to the institutions of the Church of England*; and the second, *on the practical evils of dissent*.

*Mr. Burton.* We object, Sir, to the titles assumed by the ministers of the Church of England, such as Lord Primate, Lord Archbishop, Lord Bishop, Very Reverend Dean, Venerable Archdeacon, Vicar General, Vicar Choral, Chaplain, Clergyman, &c., &c. We read not of these titles in the Holy Scriptures. They are of man's invention, and savour not of the apostles, or of the Spirit of God. Thus, the Church is part and parcel of the world, instead of being entirely and exclusively a portion of the one invisible, but not less real church of Christ.

*Mr. Herbert.* Although I admit at once, that the very precise titles made use of in our Church to which you object, cannot be found in the Holy Scriptures, yet is it not a fact that titles of honour are Christian, and are sanctioned by Holy Writ? Did not God himself, when speaking of the Jewish judges, both civil

and ecclesiastical, say, "Thou shalt not revile *the gods*, nor speak evil of the ruler of thy people." (Exodus, ch. 22, ver. 28.) When Elijah met Obadiah, did he not fall on his face and ask, "Art thou that *my Lord* Elijah?" (1 Kings, ch. 18, verses 7, 8.) Did not *St. Paul* say, when reminded that he was speaking to the high priest, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the *Ruler* of my people?" Did not *St. Peter* approve the conduct of *Sarah*, who called Abraham, "Lord?" Did not *St. Paul* even honour Festus with the title of "*Most Noble*?" Is not Theophilus styled by the Evangelist *St. Luke*, "*Most Excellent Theophilus*?" or "*Most Noble Theophilus*?" Did not *St. John* address a Christian woman of rank in the world, as "*the Elect Lady*?" And did not our Lord allow himself to be styled "*Lord*," though in the flesh, without reproving the nobleman who said unto him "Sir," or "*My Lord*, come down ere my child die?" Thus, titles of honour, so far from being sinful, are allowed and authorized by Scripture.

*Mr. Burton.* It is one thing, Sir, to make use of the courteous titles and civilities of life



in our intercourse with the world, and another thing to introduce into the Church such titles.

*Mr. Herbert.* I have no objection, Sir, to examine into the specific titles you disapprove. *Lord Primate* merely signifies “*The first.*” St. Matthew thus spoke of St. Peter, when he said, “*The first Simon, who is called Peter.*” So Archdeacon is the *first* Deacon. As to *Dean*, the original term was *Decanus*, and was applied to a Roman soldier who had the charge of ten others. When such an office became necessary in the church, it required a name, and a suitable one was found in the lowly rank of a *Roman soldier*. *Reverend* is simply from *vereor*, to respect. *Venerable* is as simple a title as *Reverend*; the one expresses the respect which arises from filial fear. the other that which springs from respectful love. *Archdeacon* is the head servant. *Vicar General* means merely a substitute; one who performs an office for another. *Vicars Choral* are simply the clergy who assisted to sing the psalms, when appointed to be so sung *by choirs* in churches. *Chaplain* is only the minister who officiates in a chapel. Whilst *Clergyman*, which has been so much objected to, is from *Clericos*, *one who has charge of the lot*; or overseers of that

church which Christ has purchased with his blood, and who are called in the Holy Scriptures, “Ministers of Christ,” and “Stewards of the mysteries of God.”

*Mr. Burton.* Yet many good men have thought, Sir, that the notion of a *clergyman* “is the sin against the Holy Ghost.” I do not go to this length, but do not clergymen claim the *exclusive* privilege of preaching, teaching, and ministering the communion, excluding all laymen from lay teaching of every description?

*Mr. Herbert.* With respect to the absurd and blasphemous notion that every clergyman is in himself “THE sin against the Holy Ghost,” though it is not novel, it belongs to fanaticism and fanatics. And with respect to the doctrine of the Church of England, as to who have the right to preach, teach, and minister the communion, the twenty-third Article says, “It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the *office* of *public* preaching before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same;” but this merely asserts that no man should usurp a church office; that he should be appointed to it by those whom the Lord has given authority to do so; but does not, in the slightest degree,

interfere with every Christian's right of teaching Christ to all around him. There are many lay members of the Church who render themselves useful in visiting the sick, and instructing young children. As to administering the Lord's Supper, even dissenting deacons do not do this.

*Mr. Burton.* But is there not a lamentable resemblance between the titles of the clergy of the Church of England, and the Papal hierarchy ?

*Mr. Herbert.* I submit not. We receive our titles from those who, as God's representatives, have a right to give them ; apostate Rome assumes them as at her own disposal. While we abhor the lawless assumption of titles by the Romish hierarchy, we regard those conferred by the civil ruler upon the ministers of our Church, as intended to be an external indication of the feeling so forcibly impressed by the apostle on the church of Thessalonica.

*Mr. Burton.* But upon what scriptural authority does the King, or do his ministers, bishops, or lay proprietors, appoint to office in the church of Christ ?

*Mr. Herbert.* I think, Sir, in the first place, you will agree with the apostle when he says,

“Obey them that have the rule *over* you, and submit yourselves.” And you will remember that he says, “We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you and are *over* you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love, for their work’s sake.” And also, “Let the elders that *rule* well, be counted worthy of double honour.” Well, Sir, these elders, or bishops, were not men who *said* they were called by the Holy Ghost, and appealed to this as a sufficient commission; nor were they chosen by the people; they were individuals selected by one who held office in the church, in virtue of human ordination; they were ordained by the imposition of his hands, and appointed by him to the sphere of their labours. The right of bishops to appoint to office is established in the Epistle of Paul to Titus. “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.”

*Mr. Burton.* To all this many objections might be made, but the question to which I invite your attention is the right of the king to appoint to office in the church of Christ.

*Mr. Herbert.* The appointment to minis-

terial office in the Church of England, consists of examination into the qualification of candidates, their ordination, and their appointment to a sphere of action. Neither the king nor his ministers interfere, directly or indirectly, with the two former. They cannot make clergymen, but can, and do only, distribute to them a few posts in the Church. The kings of Judah were allowed to exercise a similar power; and the examples of the sons of Aaron, of David, of Josiah, of Solomon, of Hezekiah, cannot be unfamiliar to you. David did not and could not make priests, but finding one family set apart for the priesthood, he distributed their several offices to them. Nothing which is spiritual in its character is done or attempted by the sovereign, but only that which is temporal.

*Mr. Burton.* This is nothing less than a vindication of the union of the Church with the state, a topic we have already exhausted; but as Christianity was a new system, and its introduction a new era in the world, the examples of Old Testament times are, on these matters, of secondary importance.

*Mr. Herbert.* I think not. I maintain that such examples are binding on us all, except where a new order of things and a new course

of action are specifically ordained. Religion is, and ought to be, a matter of the very first consideration to every state. If the Jewish kings were bound to attend to the religious welfare of their subjects, why are not Christian kings bound to do the same thing? The King of England has as much a warrant from God to distribute religious teachers throughout the land, as had Josiah, Jehoshaphat, and other kings, to proclaim and insist on the profession of the religion of Moses.

*Mr. Burton.* As this question of Church Establishments we have already discussed, let me now ask you where do you find any precedent in Scripture for a bishop using the following words, as adopted by him on conferring priests' orders; "*Receive the Holy Ghost for the office of priest into the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of my hands—whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.*" What is this but the Popish mummary of absolution?

*Mr. Herbert.* This will not be difficult, I think, Sir; for did not our Saviour say, "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had

said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; and whose-soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained?" Has not God been pleased to appoint the laying on of hands as the means by which, through his employment of human instrumentality, his Spirit is granted to his ministers? Did not St. Paul say to Timothy, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands?" Did not St. Paul state, that the "laying on of hands" was the appointed means of conveying "the gift of God?" Was not this "gift" the grace given by the Spirit of God by means of ordination?

*Mr. Burton.* But all this belonged and had reference to the apostolic age, and not to the one in which we live.

*Mr. Herbert.* Then why did St. Paul say to Timothy, "neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the *Presbytery*," i. e. by the English ecclesiastical authorities, showing that St. Paul did not on his own authority merely ordain Timothy, but that, intending his office to be a constituted Church ordinance, he

united with himself in the act the presbytery, composed of men who were themselves ordained to a similar office.

*Mr. Burton.* This evidence is in favour of the apostles and the apostolic age, but not of the present age nor of the Church of England.

*Mr. Herbert.* I beg your pardon. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The examples of Christ and his apostles were set not only for the age in which they lived, but for all time; and our English bishops, when they say "Receive the Holy Ghost," &c. only, in fact, follow the example set them by the Founder and apostles of the Christian religion.

*Mr. Burton.* But I presume you will admit, that neither our Saviour nor his apostles, either commanded or required, as do the bishops of England, that ministers should pass through one of the Universities, attend a course of divinity lectures, and be appointed to an office with a salary, before they should be able to obtain ordination.

*Mr. Herbert.* I admit, that neither the apostles nor their immediate descendants received an University education, but the Lord's charge to the primitive bishops was, to ordain those only who were "apt to teach." And though



this aptness was undoubtedly of two characters, first spiritual, and second intellectual; and though special gifts and graces were conferred by Christ himself on the first teachers of His religion, still who will maintain that intellectual “aptness,” is not included in the “aptness” of which our Saviour speaks? Then how can this intellectual aptness be so well acquired as at an University, where all the arrangements are of the highest mental order? With respect to a candidate for Holy Orders being first appointed to an office, and accompanied by a salary, it should be remembered: 1st, That every candidate declares that he trusts that he is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him that office. 2nd, That it would be absurd and injurious to ordain a man to be a pastor without a people to superintend. 3rd, That as to the lawfulness of paying ministers for preaching the Gospel, no doubt can be entertained on that head after the declaration of the apostle, that “even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.” And 4th, That the reason of the prohibition against ordaining without a salary, was to protect candidates for Holy Orders, who from their anxiety to obtain

ordination, might be taken advantage of by those who had nominations to confer.

*Mr. Burton.* But have not all these regulations a tendency to keep out of the Church those who are yet called by the Spirit of God to be ministers ; and how is it that in the primitive ages of the Church such requirements were not made ?

*Mr. Herbert.* You do not seem to be aware that the regulations as to University education, and as to salary, may be dispensed with by the bishops where circumstances render it expedient, which frequently occur. And as to the primitive church, God proved that he thought these qualifications necessary, by working a miracle to supply the deficiency until the church had subsisted sufficiently long to provide herself with suitably trained teachers. .

The conversation which took place on “ *the practical evils of dissent*,” was not less interesting or important.

*Mr. Herbert.* One of the most formidable objections to dissent is, that it encourages a spirit of disunion among the Christian inhabitants of the same parish or district. I am not now speaking of men who are alike indifferent to religion, but of those who take an interest

in the spread of truth, and who desire more that the church of Christ should extend her borders, than that the particular denomination to which they belong, should gain the ascendancy.

*Mr. Burton.* Such men, Sir, I should think, would always seek to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

*Mr. Herbert.* But without being able to succeed, Sir. Allow me to cite a case within my own knowledge. In a parish not far removed from A—— exists a church, where the clergyman is faithful, affectionate, and devoted. The most evangelical dissenter on earth could not make any objection either to his conduct, or his doctrine. Regular and faithful in the discharge of all his duties, both in the pulpit and reading desk, at the font, at the altar, by the sick beds of his parishioners, as well as everywhere where his presence could be required, or where his example and counsels could be beneficial; his church was well attended, it was large enough for the population, there was no want of church room, and the clergyman in question was fully able to discharge the labours which devolved on him. It was the perfection of the *parochial system*.

At length a man of some wealth, a retired tradesman from London, settled down in the village in question to spend the remainder of his days. Accustomed to a style of preaching, among dissenters, wholly different to that of the country clergyman, after attending a few Sundays at his new parish church, he was loud in his complaints against the *Arminianism* of his rector, and declared that "*this was not the Gospel.*" For some time his complaints were disregarded, but at length he registered his dining-room for a week-day service, made an arrangement with a popular and bustling preacher of the Independent denomination to "go over" every Thursday afternoon; and began a dissenting schism in the quiet rural parish of this evangelical clergyman. As the retired tradesman expended a considerable sum in the village, employed many workmen, and had several servants and farming men, his Thursday evening meeting was soon well attended, and the first step in the schism was taken. After some weeks it was announced, that not only the Thursday evening service would be regularly continued, but that one on Sunday evening, at six o'clock, would likewise be commenced. The Sunday evening service was con-

ducted by a dissenting student, who was sent there from A——, and the Thursday evening service, as before, by another minister. Still no interference took place with the hours and services of the Establishment, as there was no service in the church either on Sunday or Thursday evenings. For some months this state of things continued, and the attendance at church was by no means diminished. At last the student, who had supplied on the Sunday with regularity for some months, left the academy, in which he had studied for three or four years the theology of dissenters, and, perceiving that there was at least *one* wealthy man to support him in the attempt, he concurred with the retired tradesman in his opinion, that there was “an opening” for a dissenting “cause” in the village, and that it was only necessary to raise the funds for a small building in order to found a dissenting “*interest*.” The retired tradesman offered a slip of ground; one of the managers of the dissenting academy, in which the student had been educated, volunteered £20 towards the erection of the chapel; and the student wrote out a “*case*,” and set about begging. That case was full of deplorable *exaggerations*. The inhabitants of the village

were represented as *destitute of the means of grace*; the village itself was designated "*dark and benighted*;" no notice was taken of the regular, assiduous, and evangelical efforts of the clergyman; and Christians of all denominations were called on "*to come out to the help of the Lord against the mighty*." The sum of £200 was raised; besides this the retired tradesman gave £50, and agreed to lend £100 on mortgage; and with this total sum of £350 a dissenting chapel was erected in the most conspicuous part of the village, and very near the church, in which for many years the Gospel had been faithfully preached, and the sacraments as faithfully and devoutly administered. Whilst the chapel was erecting, the dissenting services were conducted three times on the Sunday, and once on a Thursday, in the large dining-room of the retired tradesman; and several sermons were preached against the "*sin and danger of conformity*." At first the rural population could hardly understand this *new sin*, nor the danger of committing it, as they had never seen their parents and relatives attend at any other place of worship than the parish church; but by degrees they were persuaded, because in some cases willing, to believe: 1st,

“ That tithes and church-rates were *very bad things* ;” 2nd, “ That God Almighty could not need the *State* to aid Him in carrying on His religion in the world ;” 3rd, “ That all priests in all ages were enemies to vital religion ;” and, 4th, “ That if the state religion were done away with, taxes would be diminished, land would become cheaper, and true religion would prevail.” These sermons, and other efforts made to set the inhabitants of this rural district against the Church, partially succeeded ; and when the little “ *Salem*,” for so the dissenting meeting-house was called, was opened, there was an attendance of from one hundred to one hundred and twenty on the Sunday, and from fifty to seventy on the Thursday. From that moment the inhabitants of the village became divided, the hands of the clergyman were enfeebled, the dissenting minister was obliged to establish auxiliary places of worship at cottages and farms in the neighbourhood of the central village, in order to obtain from the whole of them just enough salary to keep the wolf from the door ; and disunion, discontent, bad feeling, and irreligious controversy ensued. The village became at last so distracted with religious differences, that a Baptist “ *Bethel* ”

was founded to contest every inch of the ground with the Independent "*Salem*;" and though the Church continued to bear away the palm as long as the clergyman lived and remained there, yet, on his removal to another sphere, by an exchange of earth for heaven, the breach widened, the separation became greater, and the once "auburn village," whose inhabitants ascended with joy to the church of their forefathers "to keep holiday," became the scene of interminable brawls and distracting divisions. This is *one* of the practical evils of dissent.

*Mr. Burton.* You have, no doubt, highly coloured the picture, Sir, which is, at any rate, rather an exception than the rule; for, you must admit, that, generally speaking, where the truth is faithfully preached in the Church of England, and where church-room is sufficient, dissenters abstain from erecting their meeting-houses, and from establishing new causes.

*Mr. Herbert.* I am sorry to say, Sir, that I can make no such admission as this. The first Nonconformist preachers adopted this plan, and Mr. Wesley, during his life, persisted in not allowing his preachers to open their



chapels for service during church hours—but this is no longer the case with the dissenters; and the Wesleyans are also changing their plans.

*Mr. Burton.* But are not differences in opinion favourable to the progress of the Gospel? Do we not read of the differences which soon arose in the early church between Paul and Barnabas, and yet is it not an admitted fact that the cause of the Gospel gained by this division?

*Mr. Herbert.* This would be to do evil that good may come, and to infer that because God might overrule the differences of two of his first apostles on some secondary points, therefore that he is opposed to the existence of peace, love, and union among his children.

*Mr. Burton.* History and facts have shown us that a perfect union on all secondary, or even on all primary points and questions, is wholly impossible, and that where there was a sameness of views, there was generally either spiritual death, or spiritual coldness.

*Mr. Herbert.* So, then, you apologize, Sir, for, or rather vindicate, the line of conduct pursued by the dissenters in the country village to which I have referred.

*Mr. Burton.* Without being better acquainted with all the details of the case, I should prefer not offering any special opinion on it ; but, as a *general rule*, I am rather disposed to think, that the cause of truth is promoted by what you call disunion, but which I style the multiplication of the means of grace.

*Mr. Herbert.* The next “ practical evil ” of dissent is, in my opinion, the stirring up in the Church itself a spirit of sectarianism, which in former times never existed. For instance, where dissent is at all formidable in a country town or city, the church-goers themselves become more captious, people of second and third-rate education venture to set themselves up as judges of the orthodoxy and soundness of their clergymen ; rectors and vicars receive anonymous and other letters from these theological censors, complaining of the doctrines of their curates ; at one time they require “ an Evangelical minister, a Wesley preacher, or a Whitefieldite ; at another time the clergyman is too Calvinistic ; then moderate Calvinism is preferred ; then dissenters aid these half-corrupted Churchmen in petitions to the bishop for the removal of an obnoxious curate ; and acrimony, variance, strife, and many other

evils are introduced, where, before dissent made its appearance, Churchmen were satisfied, pious, and prayerful.

*Mr. Burton.* Your objection, Sir, amounts to this, that when dissenters set about attending to the concerns of their souls, and of those of their fellow-parishioners, they do so in right earnest, and will not submit to the every-day, cold, formal, merely moral preaching of the clergy of the Establishment. This conduct of theirs is catching. Thank God it is so: rather than lament over it. If curates were oftener petitioned against, and were still oftener removed, the Church would not contain so many mere formal preachers.

*Mr. Herbert.* The Church will never be purified or vivified, Sir, by the introduction of personal acrimony, of dissatisfied and unspiritual tempers, of sectarian views or discipline, or of party feeling amongst her members. Episcopacy does *not* look on *preaching* as *all* the duty of a minister of the Gospel, any more than it regards preaching as the most important part of divine worship. No; all such views are dissenting, sectarian, and not in harmony with the doctrines, discipline, constitution, or worship of the Church of England; and to in-

troduce them into the Church is a *practical evil*.

*Mr. Burton.* This belongs to the class of objections made by men who object to the Gospel being preached anywhere. The apostles were pointed at by the finger of scorn and of anger in *their* days, and it was said of them at one place that they who had turned the world upside down had gone thither also. Wherever the Gospel is preached with fidelity, it must make a mighty change in society as well as in individuals, and as a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, so a little good, lively, dissenting preaching in time will leaven all the Church.

*Mr. Herbert.* You should know, however, I think, Sir, that I should rejoice as much as you would do at the spiritual leavening of every parish in the kingdom; but I even go further than this, and maintain that one of the practical evils of dissent is to introduce a spirit of hypocrisy into the Church and the population of the country, instead of a spirit of Christian honesty, and manly, open, and ingenuous conduct.

*Mr. Burton.* This is too serious a charge to be made or taken lightly; I will thank you to go fully into this accusation of hypocrisy.

*Mr. Herbert.* I will do so. A high standard of religious perfection and experience is attributed to a membership at a dissenting meeting. This arises from the sacramental scrutiny which occurs before any Christian is admitted by them to *their* table. The candidates must relate their Christian experience to the deacons, and they must report thereon. What is the practical effect of this system? It neither excludes the worldly, the worldling, the Socinian, the lukewarm, the mere speculator in religion, or even political agitators and religious brawlers. Those who wish for admission to dissenting churches, have only to adopt the Shibboleth—for it is their only qualification; what is the consequence? Men talk hypocritically; exaggerate their religious feelings; and obtain admission. The evil does not stop here. Small tradesmen who desire eminence and importance, become dissenters on the same terms, and the example is followed by many. Their vanity is flattered. Their hopes of improving their worldly business or position, come to their aid. A little religious “*éclat*” is agreeable to them all. Hypocrisy enters into their characters. They are but ordinary men in their own sphere, beneath the shadow of the Church; but *our* table, *our* chapel, *our*

servant, *our* minister, are captivating forms of expression.

*Mr. Burton.* But the silver and dross, Sir, are always mingled in this world, and you surely will not pretend that all who receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the Church of England, are sincere Christians.

*Mr. Herbert.* I maintain no such thing; but then the dissenting system professes to refine and purify an ordinance, in which they accuse the Church of laxity and carelessness. Yet the Church is by far less lax than the dissenters; for Churchmen *are* warned publicly and solemnly not to eat and drink damnation to themselves; whilst the dissenters, on having passed the examinations of their deacons, have nothing to fear; no warnings to listen to, and no reprimands to incur. Thus the dissenting system is favourable to a low species of infidelity, to lifeless cold formality, to a deficiency of lively faith, to a loss of Christian experience, to a sceptical half-doubting, half-assenting belief in the Scriptures, to a too high esteem for outward forms, to a self-complacent spirit, and to an absence of that meek, devoted, humble, and adoring love to the Saviour which kneels at his table, and reverentially

receives the precious memorials of the Cross of Christ.

*Mr. Burton.* You are depicting what may be called a low state of religion in any church, whether dissenting or Episcopalian. It is unfair to call this *exclusively* dissent.

*Mr. Herbert.* Indeed there is nothing unfair in it. Dissenters assume a much higher standard of practical holiness to exist among them, than amongst Church people. The bad conduct of dissenters in their worldly affairs, does not correspond with their high-sounding profession. Church people observe this; they declare that they loathe hypocrisy, and in order to escape from the charge of being hypocrites, they exhibit lukewarmness on matters of the highest importance. Young persons are also much led away by dissent. They are flattered and praised; even children are taught to write letters on Christian experience; girls and boys sit in scornful judgment on the plans of the parochial minister, and press their petulant impertinencies on men whose religious experience has been benefitted by the collision of twenty years. Timidity and modesty are treated as sins, instead of graces. Look at another case; that of the baptism of adults by immer-

*Vicar.* This is one of the greatest evils now afflicting us as a Church. Those senseless cries for “Reform” which we now hear, would not assail and wound us as they do, if the unity of the Church were attended to and maintained. The unity of the Church is the secret of its prosperity; and a want of unity, of its decay.

*Biographer.* The necessity for an apostolical ministry appears to me to be also a cardinal point, which has been awfully disregarded.

*Vicar.* Yes, awfully indeed, Sir. Men mistake priestcraft for the apostolical succession, or for a regularly ordained ministry. It is one thing to be a channel through which God chooses to convey blessings to the Church, and another thing to be the blessing itself. It is one thing to convey infallible truths, and another thing to be the *infallible* medium. The Romanists require implicit subjection to the priesthood; dissenters have no priesthood at all; but the Church alike rejects these errors, and requires us to listen to her ministers as men commissioned by Jesus Christ, invested by him with his authority to teach, and to whose teaching a special blessing is attached; thus clearing away the rubbish of Popery, and the unbelief and self-will of dissent.



*Biographer.* Do you think, Sir, it is necessary to return much nearer to Romanism, in order to cure this growing inattention to the principles, discipline, sacraments, ordinances, and Rubric of the Catholic Church?

*Vicar.* By no means, Sir. We ought neither to go as near to error as possible, for the sake of being primitive; nor yet rush to other extremes, because forsooth, "evils are to be cured by their contraries!" Ultra-Protestantism and Romanism are the *two extremes*. Ultra-Protestantism is dissent. Romanism is Papacy. The Catholic Church has avoided them both, and we must study to do the same thing. It is not because we have neglected the unity of the Church of Christ that we are to make the Church infallible. It is not because the necessity for an apostolical ministry in the Church has been lost sight of, of late years, therefore, that the ministers are to be regarded as infallible also. We are not, and ought not, to take a preacher as our interpreter, any more than we should antiquity, to the exclusion of the Sacred Writings. It is not because the efficacy of the sacraments has been awfully disregarded, that the sacraments are to be raised to an exclusive value in the salvation

of man. And it is not because Catholic antiquity has, during the last forty years, been falling into disrespect, therefore, that the Fathers are to be made to usurp the place of the oracles of God. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper has been greatly neglected; but whilst men are regenerated by baptism, they must be renewed by the Holy Ghost, and this must be evidenced by life and conduct. It is a dangerous thing to say, that a man may feed on Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist, and yet that his life may be of such an outwardly questionable character that no one would know him to be a Christian. Some of our clergy believe, Sir, that we are fed to eternal life by the body and blood of Christ, which are hidden in the sacrament. This is a dangerous error. The food for the body is bread and wine. The food for the soul is the grace of and love of God, communicated not *materially* but *spiritually*. As water is the sign of regeneration in baptism, and yet the water so used is *not* the water which came from the riven side of our blessed Redeemer; so the bread and the wine are the signs of that spiritual life which those have who feast spiritually, and *wholly* spiritually, on Christ's love, grace, and pardon.

There is always a tendency on the part of ignorance, Sir, to rush to extremes. The Church is too much exalted, as by the Papists; or too little regarded, as by the dissenters. The ministers of the Church are its servants and representatives, as well as those of Christ; but some of our clergy will not have this either, thus raising unduly their character. They have a heavenly, but they have also an earthly mission. It is, undoubtedly, better to have too great a veneration for the Church and sacraments than too little. Education without the Church, I mean national education, is an absurdity. Nothing can be more deplorable than *Lancasterian* schools; they are the plague of our land. Schools *without fixed principles* are nurseries of heresy. To teach *all* catechisms is to deify human reason, and to enthrone and glorify man's private judgment. *No Churchman should subscribe to a Lancasterian school.* Let dissenters support them if they will, but not Churchmen. The Churchman should never forget that he believes in Catholic authority and in Catholic antiquity, and should, therefore, support both, by discountenancing all that attacks them. It should never be forgotten, Sir, that, in exalting the Church, you exalt

Christ. For it is a fatal error to separate the Church from its Head. God has not given us other direct means of knowledge than the Bible, and it is entitled to our best regard. The Church should take care, however, that its discipline be kept up, or else, with good creeds and good sacraments, it may still degenerate. Sponsors at the baptismal font should not be accepted lightly. I have frequently refused to accept them when I knew that they had no intention to attend to, or fulfil their vows. I have seen, in London parishes, *women of bad character*, known bad character, present themselves as godmothers, and I have refused them. The Bible, the Prayer-book, the Rubric, and the Articles of the Church, must be read and taken literally, and acted upon accordingly. *No mental reserve* or hidden belief can be allowed in these matters. Unfortunately, it happens, much too often, that the clergy have such immense districts to superintend, that they are *unable*, physically so, to obey the Rubric; therefore, the *first* thing to be done is to divide the dioceses; then divide parishes into districts; then erect district churches; then enforce the Rubric; then get back to the sacraments and to Catholic antiquity; but with all

this to pray for the spirit of faith and of prayer, in *each* believer, and for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on this branch of the Catholic Church, since, without such Spirit, all other changes will be comparatively unavailing. The members of the Church, Sir, must also pray and strive against a love of *novelty*. There can be no *novelty* in true religion. It is but another name for error. Reformation is the bringing us back to the old fountain of old truth, and not to mere land-springs, soon exhausted and dry. Christianity has no new facts to disclose. It has been the fundamental error of all the Southcottian, Swedenborgian, and other systems I have seen rise and fall, deceive and destroy, that all come with something *new*, forgetting that it hath been said by Him who cannot lie, "If any man shall add unto these things, God will add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." The knowledge of Christianity and its spread in the world are progressive, but not Christianity itself. It is, like its Divine Author, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And it is *one* of the capital errors of dissent that it acts, and reasons, and works, as if something *new* had incessantly to be *discovered* in

religion. Whereas the Catholic Church contains the *whole* of Christianity, to which nothing in this world can ever be added, and from which, also, nothing can be taken away.

*Biographer.* Do you not think, Sir, that 'a want of union among the clergy of the Church is a vast evil, and that if it were remedied by a frank and Christian union, a great deal more good would result from their ministrations?

*Vicar.* Of this there can be no doubt, Sir, and often have I wept over this want of union. Nothing is so favourable to the growth of Popery and of sectarianism as this. I have lived in districts, where, if the clergy had met together, concerted together, and devised and executed united plans, dissenterism could not have maintained its ground a week; but for want of such union, one clergyman has pulled this way, and another in the opposite direction, and the Church has been frequently defeated. The rural deans can effect much; the archdeacons still more; but the parochial clergy among each other most of all. "A whole ocean of human life is not only pent up within the limits of our straitest diocese," but even in a single deanery. The monthly assembling of clergy in a given district at certain

were, in the end, beneficial to Episcopacy and to the parochial system; and the church, and chapel of ease, in 1802 and 1803, were crowded with attentive and edified congregations. Dissent has no chance in any district where there is church-room—where the clergy are numerous, devoted, and evangelical—where the services are performed with care, order, and zeal—and where there is a happy harmony subsisting between the Church clergy and Church laymen.

But Mr. Herbert had another class of objectors and opponents to contend with in his large parish: they were Infidels, Deists, and Socinians. The principles of the French Revolution had made fearful ravages in Great Britain from 1793 to 1800. But for the efforts of the English Church to withstand the progress of these subversive dogmas, not only the Church, but the State would have been overthrown. The impieties of Thomas Paine, as well as his ultra-democratical principles—the first exhibited in his “Age of Reason,” and the next in his “Rights of Man”—had, aided by the republican character of dissent, and its opposition, either secret or open, to the Church of England and to the political institutions of the country, shaken the faith of many a young man, and

given an unbelieving or doubting character to the opinions of persons of more advanced years. Priestley, Rees, Worthington, and Belsham, enjoyed vast reputation among dissenters; but their political and religious feelings and conduct were all avowedly hostile to the Church. New sects among dissenters sprung out of the principles of the French Revolution; principles increasingly opposed to all *authority* in matters of religion, and favourable to the unlimited exercise of private judgment. Mr. Herbert, though averse to controversies of a *political* character, and though a lover of toleration in its widest extent to all religionists who at least affected to rest their creed on argument and not on raillery or on ridicule, felt it to be his duty not to remain an idle spectator of the then important contest. It was not men he defended, but measures; it was measures he attacked, not men. Attached to the institutions of his country, whilst he knew they were not perfect, he was satisfied that those who attacked them were still less so, and desired not to amend, but to overthrow them. He was well informed as to the alliances existing between heterodox dissenters and the French ultra-liberal parties; as well as those which



subsequently were formed between Papists, levellers, and dissenters, with the revolutionary factions in other countries. He felt it then his duty to enter the lists against infidelity, deism, republicanism, and revolution; and many a letter did he address to a newspaper, many an address did he write and distribute amongst his parishioners, many a pamphlet did he print on the then deplorable condition of the Church in the wilderness, and many a sermon did he preach against the fanatical insanity of contending factions. He knew, and felt, that the pastor of a parish, he who has the spiritual charge of a large flock, cannot hope to accomplish the mission entrusted to his care, unless he shall sometimes descend from the lofty sphere and elevation of his sacred calling to take an interest in the passing events of an ever-fluctuating society, and seek to improve them to the moral and spiritual interests and conditions of men. It was in the course of what he wisely regarded his pastoral duties that he became acquainted with the deplorable ignorance of the lower orders, and has, in his Diary, depicted scenes of depravity and unbelief which would at first appear to be either unreal or exaggerated; but his character is a

voucher that they were neither. The following extracts are some of the most striking:—

“ *September 14, 1803.*—I have witnessed to-day a scene which has filled me with horror and alarm;—horror for the wretched being whom I was called to visit; alarm at the progress, in the very heart of society, of the deplorable and monstrous dogmas which have given rise to such examples. Stretched on a mattress, in a small room, in the garret-story of an old, dirty, and half-falling-down house, lay a young man, apparently about twenty-five years of age, who having felt tired of the world, wearied of his existence, and satisfied that the realities of Christian truth were the mere phantoms of disordered imaginations and of enthusiastic or fanatical minds, had resolved on committing *suicide*. To effect his purpose, he had procured a strong nail and a cord, and had fastened, as well as he could, the door of the wretched hovel, in which he breathed rather than lived; and had entered his apartment to destroy himself at the hour of five in the afternoon. After hanging for some minutes, till he became wholly insensible, the nail gave way from the ceiling, and his body fell to the ground. The lodgers below felt convinced that the sound was one of no ordinary character, and, with little difficulty, forced the door of the wretched garret. Life was not extinct. Medical assistance was procured; at the end of an hour

or two he was so far recovered as to be able to speak ; and the persons who were collected by the event felt it their duty to send to me to visit him. When I arrived, I found he had been bled, had received some slight bruises from the fall, and was weak and trembling ; but as soon as he saw me, he raised himself from his crouching appearance, and, sitting upright, appeared to say, by his look of defiance and repulsion, ‘ What have you to do with me ? Why do you intrude on my solitude and my misfortunes ? ’ I at once informed him that I had come to see him at the request of others ; that I was but partially acquainted with his case ; that I only desired to offer him such pecuniary aid and such spiritual instruction or consolation as he might stand in need of, and that I had no wish either to pry into his sorrows or to seek to add to their poignancy. He replied, with great *nonchalance*, ‘ You must know, Sir, that I am a *materialist*. ’ Wearied of life, and, having no pleasures or duties, no attractions or enjoyments in this state, called earth, into which chance has thrown me, I determined to regain my original nothingness, and to terminate my being. Unfortunately I did not succeed. Fearing to alarm or disturb by my hammering, I did not drive the nail sufficiently firmly into the ceiling, so the rope gave way ; some officious, but good-intentioned people came to what they absurdly call ‘ *my relief*, ’ and have since compelled me to endure all sorts of horrors of bleeding and fainting, because

they will detain me against my will in a world with which I have no sympathy, and into which I have been thrown, by some of the unaccountable jumbings of matter, to spend a few years, and then disappear for ever.' 'Not *for ever*,' I replied. 'Oh yes! *for ever*. There is no doubt, and there *can* be no cavilling upon that head; dead once—dead for ever. Life's fitful cord once cut, is cut *for ever*—annihilation is my joy. I would not live here or elsewhere *for ever*, as you, the paid priesthood of a faith long since exploded by science and philosophy, would teach us, not if all the blessings you create in your own imaginings could be secured to me for ever. There is no bliss like death, and yet this bliss is denied me! But it cannot be denied me long, and a few days hence my wish shall be accomplished.'

"The young man looked at me during the whole time he said this with perfect coolness and self-possession, and though at its close he was evidently agitated, it was the agitation of his enfeebled body, and not of his mind. I endeavoured to show him that he was under the influence of morbid feeling, was the victim of disappointed hopes, or was suffering from disease. He declared, 'that all my suppositions were erroneous; that if he was poor, it was simply because he *would not* be rich; that if he lived in a garret, it was because he *would not work* for a body which gave him no pleasure to possess; and that if he was there stretched on a bed, an object of com-

passion to myself, *he* pitied *me*, who wished to live, who toiled and laboured for self-deception and to deceive others, and who, after years of prayers, penances, faith, and conviction, would have to take the same great leap, and be seen and heard no more *for ever*.' Doctor T—— advised me to draw my visit to a close, as he was about to administer a strong anodyne, and he hoped that repose would ensue. As I left the room, the young man turned his head, and said, 'I thank you for your courteousness, Sir, and shall be happy to see you at any time, *i. e.* till we part *for ever*.' I shall return to him to-morrow; and now pray the God of all grace, that my visits may be made useful to one, who has evidently received a good education, but is one of the numerous victims of the infidelity and false principles of this revolutionary and atheistical age."

"*September 15th, 1803.*—What a spectacle have I this day witnessed! How my heart freezes at the thought. My senses seem benumbed. I am as one paralyzed and without sensation. I proceeded this afternoon to make my second visit to the wretched being who attempted suicide. His temporary fever had subsided. He was coolly audacious, and politely conceited, and self-satisfied. I talked to him of God. He asked me, 'Who is God? What *material* proof can you supply me with that there is a God? I want no *moral* arguments, no metaphysical reasoning,' he added, 'but *material proof*. You

can supply me with none, and you know it.' I attempted to convince him that nature itself supplied abundant reasons to prove the existence of a great First Cause; but he interrupted me by saying, 'I know all you can say; but I have read too much of philosophy to be a Christian.' 'Too little, I fear,' I replied; but I also added, 'the world by wisdom knew not God.' He smiled ironically, and said, 'The Bible again—the Bible, I suppose—eh, Sir?' I felt the indignation of a Christian at these sneers from one, who was not worthy to stand in the antichamber of a Locke, a Newton, or a Milton; and how much less to erect his puny head against the omnipotence of Heaven. 'It is the glory of *my* system,' he said, with a self-assurance, which was as chilling as it was deplorable, 'that there are no *degrees* or scales of intelligencies, minds, or bodies; all is resumable into the eternity of matter, which will ever work its fantastic and varied operations, neither accountable to man, to angel, to demon, or to whom you call God.' I told him that *his* system was not novel, but that *true* philosophy had exploded it long ago; and then, feeling that my only hope was to speak to him of the love of my Saviour to a lost and ruined world, I addressed myself to his heart, and presented in a few words the history of man, his wretched condition, his need of salvation, and the all-sufficient merits, as well as the unbounded mercy of a risen and exalted Redeemer. 'I loathe your

Christianity,' was his reply, 'and I abhor your system of sacrifice and mediation. Christianity, Sir, is the offspring of superstition, priestcraft, and cowardice.' 'Not of *cowardice*,' I replied, 'at any rate; for the great High Priest of our profession suffered the pain and disgrace of the most ignominious death. Infidelity is *cowardly*, if you will, for it shrinks from moral responsibility, from moral fitness, and from moral requirements. It shrinks from the consequences of its own system, and would consign both body and mind to annihilation rather than be responsible to its Creator, and rather than meet the penalties of an offended law-giver.' The young man rose, and walked towards the window; he appeared to be in pain. 'I acknowledge no moral responsibility, there is nothing to be called moral fitness; moral requirements are nonsense; man is master of his own actions, and accountable only to himself. The action I am about to commit regards neither you nor any other being—but myself;' and taking, with inconceivable rapidity, a razor from the side-pocket of his coat, before I had time to rush forward, he had nearly severed his head from his body. I scarcely know what followed this awful and unexpected act. At the moment of its commission the door of his room opened, and his father entered. The old man had been apprized of the attempt at suicide already made, and had come for the *last time* to attempt to persuade his son to abandon his isolated and morbid state of

life and feeling, and return to his family. He arrived only to witness a bleeding corpse. O my God! what is man, that thou shouldst be mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou shouldst visit him? And yet him whom thou hast made but a little lower than the angels, thus dares to dispute thy sovereignty, to brave thy laws, to defy thy wrath, to mock thy word, to insult the Saviour revealed to him, and to rush unbidden, unforgiven, unprepared, into thine awful presence! There is no safety, O my God, but beneath the shadow of the cross."

" Deep in my heart, dear Lord, be wrought  
The potent memory of thy Cross!  
Nail to that tree each rebel thought,  
And let me deem all else as loss!  
Stamp its meek image on my breast,  
In patience, lowliness, and love!  
Be this on earth my spirit's rest,  
And this, my song, still new, above!"

There were other objects of a more extended character than those of parochial duties which occupied much of the time and affections of Mr. Herbert. He took a deep interest in the success of the *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, and the *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*. How often would he love to turn to the printed records of the first Institution, and dwell on



the list of the great and good men who, during a century, had taken the liveliest interest in its progress and triumphs. On occasion of hearing the sermon of Dr. Pretymán, the Bishop of Lincoln, in 1804, he recorded in his diary :

“ Heard this day a powerful and admirable sermon from Dr. Pretymán. Amidst the various changes I have already witnessed in public events, as in public feeling, how delightful it is to turn to these pious and profitable anniversaries of our beloved Church. Whilst I rejoice at the rising institution, ‘*The Church Missionary Society* :’ am happy to learn of the efforts for circulating the Scriptures without note or comment by the *New Bible Society* : and approve of many of the tracts issued by the *Religious Tract Society* : yet I turn with unaffected and increased pleasure to our *old Church Institutions*, with a century of beneficial influence and of good deeds on their heads. And how lovely a sight is that when, assembled in the great cathedral of our old Mother Church, so faithful to her disciples and her children, the infants of the metropolitan parishes assemble and sing their angelic anthems to the honour and the praise of God. These are nurseries for heaven. These parochial schools are worthy of an enlightened and a Christian nation. These are our defence against the proud and the scoffing invader, and these our Christian

*talisman* against the successful assaults of infidelity and popery."

In 1805, he thus wrote of "*The Bible Society* :"—

"I have been conversing with Dr. P..... on the subject of the new Bible Society. There appears to exist some doubt as to its *Church* character, and some apprehensions as to what may be its results. The objections I have heard are these: it is not called for; people are not prepared for it; it is not a *Church* effort; it is in hostility to existing *Church* societies; it will, if successful, make the Bible a drug; and if not successful, do injury to religion. I meet these objections this way: if it be not called for, neither was Christianity; if people are not prepared for it, it is high time they should be; if it be *not* a *Church* effort, it should be made one; if it be in hostility to existing Church societies, the clergy should do the work by a Church Bible Society on a larger scale; if it shall be successful, the Bible will be in every cottage; and if unsuccessful, more shame to us all! The dissenters and Methodists are clamorous for it; then we should be more clamorous still. The more the Bible is understood, the less and less of dissent will be found in its pages. If I know any thing of myself, I am a sincere Churchman; but I am so because, with the Bible in my hand, I can not only

withstand, but defeat all the sectarists in the universe, though they are multiplying with very great rapidity. I not only do *not fear* the Bible Society, but I am convinced that it will be of *vast utility* to the Church of England, will diminish sectarianism, and will open the eyes of those who at present are blinded by party prejudices and false statements against the Church to the fact, that this calumniated Church is to be found *in the Bible*, and that its doctrines, discipline, and laws are *all* in harmony with it. I cannot agree with some of my clerical brethren, nor yet with our hierarchy, though I submit, as it is my duty to do, with humility and obedience, as to the best line of conduct to be adopted with respect to *half-separatists and their institutions*. I deplore deeply, that John Wesley was not treated with more of lenity; and I now think that the new Bible Society contains in it the seeds of so much goodness, that we should all rather seek to render it Episcopalian, and to attach it to our Church, than to stand aloof from it. Every great religious movement should be commenced and carried out by and for our Church, and it is, in my opinion, unwise to throw those who separate from her on their own resources."

In 1806, he recorded of the "*Church Missionary Society*:"—

"I am thankful to God for the success of all Church societies; and whilst some may not approve of

every step, or of every view taken by the founders of the *Church Missionary Society*, yet the true way to keep it wholly and soundly *Church* in all its parts, is to help it with Church influence, and regulate it by Church discipline. It is a bad policy to ask dissenters to support Church societies. Some may aid them from a love of truth, from a conviction that the Church is not ‘*quite so bad*’ as they were once taught to believe it was, and some from a love of display ; but nearly all who do so will be sure to say, ‘ Why, the Episcopalians are so indifferent to vital religion, that even their own societies they would be unable to keep alive if we did not aid to support them.’ If the Church will, and she ought to will so, that all should be done by her and for her in this country, she should take the lead in all societies, and particularly when Bibles, Missionaries, or Tracts are the objects of attention. I desire the most complete success to this institution.”

The formation of the “*Jews’ Society*,” led, in 1809, to the following observations in his journal:—

“ We are bound, as Christians, to rejoice in all efforts having for their end the salvation of any portion of the human race. But I know of none more dear to me than *the Jews*. They were the depositors of the law, the school of the prophets, the favoured and beloved people of the Most High.

Look at the long line of patriarchs and prophets who were Jews, till in the fulness of time my Saviour, who was a Jew, was nailed to the accursed tree for the sins of the whole world. There are many of my brethren who think that the time for the calling of the Jews has not come. Perhaps not; but as 'coming events cast their shadows before them,' and as John the Baptist was the forerunner of his divine Master, so the movement in the Church, and around it in all directions, now going on, may be preparatory to the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. The worst of it is, that there is too much of party spirit and feeling in all efforts made by dissenters. The Jews' Society interests me much, but I fear that something like sectarianism is connected with it. How sad and weak is this! For when the Jews shall return to Jerusalem they will not return to be Independents or Baptists, but to be Christians."

How happy would Mr. Herbert have been if he had lived to see the present state and character of this same institution.

Few societies, however, were dearer to Mr. Herbert than "*The Prayer-book and Homily Society.*" He wrote in 1812:—

"I am fond of distinct objects, distinct plans, and distinct means. I am averse to any thing like uncertainty in matters of such high behest as those of religion. One of my objections, not to the circulation

of good books by any one, but to the circulation of tracts by the *Religious Tract Society*, is my apprehension that, from a desire to be *too liberal* and too general, they may in time become too little specific in their treatises. But to '*The Prayer-book and Homily Society*,' no such objection can be made. Who that knows and reads with attention and piety 'the Prayer-book' does not love it? Dissenters themselves being our judges, it is 'the most wonderful collection of prayers and thanksgivings ever prepared or collected by man.' And, then, the *Homilies*, those beautiful and blessed sermons, which tended so much in the 16th century to calm by their godly influence the irritation and angry passions which did so much to injure the cause of true religion, and this at times when every expression was discussed and debated, and when the clergy first resorted to *written* discourses to avoid the evils which arose from misrepresentation, and false accusations. How wise is it once more to cause those admirable and pious documents to be published! When preachers were deficient in former times, the first Book of Homilies was published, and from that moment the standard of the faith of the Church of England was established. The immortal Jewel was one of their composers. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hopkins, and Becon, all assisted in their preparation. The Homilies on salvation, faith, and good works were prepared by Cranmer. How admirable is the fact, that though various parties have

predominated, and various opinions have been held in Church and State since their preparation, yet it is demonstrated, by the similarity which exists between the varied collections of those previous Christian Anglican Gems, that the Homilies have not been tampered with by any sect or party among us, for the purpose of making them express sentiments different from those of the original compilers. How admirable was the notion then of establishing a *Prayer-book and Homily Society*! May these wonderful compilations of men serve as admirable and devotional helps to the reading and understanding that Word of God, which is the basis of all our hopes, and the source and authority of all our creeds."

To the *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* he had been from early years a *stated contributor*. On one occasion, after having conversed with a friend on the increase of *missionary societies*, both Church, Wesleyan, and Dissenting, he recorded in his diary:—

"Conversed with Dr. Goddard to-day, on the subject of *foreign missions*. I was much struck with his observation, that more than a century had elapsed between the Revolution of 1688 and the establishment of a *dissenting missionary society* at the close of the eighteenth century; whereas only twelve years had

rolled away from the same period (1688), ere the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was established. True, its first years were weak and timid, but its very existence demonstrates how unkind and uncharitable, as well as incorrect, is the charge often brought by dissenters against both Church and Churchmen, that, but for *them*, the Church of England would have remained indifferent to men's salvation in foreign lands. The fact is that the Church has taken the lead in *every thing*; and those who now boast of forming *new* societies, are but her imitators. Dr. Goddard has stirred up within me my too dormant churchism. • It is well to have a *catholic*, but it is also well to have a *grateful* spirit. I desire to love all true Christians, and to put the best construction on the opinions of mistaken, if they are but pious men; but I am bound to be thankful to God that I am a Church of England man, that her ritual is what it is, her spirit what it is, her tolerant character what it is, and that her sacraments, ordinances, offices, rubric, liturgy, all are so pure, so devout, and so *evangelical* in the best sense of that too often exclusive term. I must set to work among my flock, and see what can be done for our dear old Church societies, not forgetting at the same time the Bible and Church Missionary institutions."

Of the custom, which in later years pre-



vailed of some clergyman preaching an annual sermon, at a parish church in the metropolis, for a dissenting missionary society, he observed:—

“ If I thought that I had the smallest portion of *real bigotry* in my character, I would fall on my knees and pray, ‘ Lord, eradicate it from my heart ;’ but must not a Church, and, above all, a *National Church*, have some fixed and regular discipline? Should not that discipline be invariable? Without discipline can there be order? Without order can there be progress? Impossible! I have been led into this train of reflection from the circumstance of seeing it announced that a sermon would be preached by ———, a most excellent and amiable man, but a very rickety Churchman, on behalf of the *London Missionary Society and its funds*. This sounds oddly to one’s ears, when our Church societies are in so much need of aid, that the best efforts and contributions of Churchmen should be asked for *dissenting* societies, and that, at the very moment, they are complaining of Church influence in British colonies, and are seeking to diminish, if not to destroy it, is singular indeed. I feel little doubt that in pagan countries their missionaries would co-operate with those of our Church societies, but would they do so in our *British* possessions, or in North America? I trow not; nay, I am sure they do not, and would not.

Yet we who believe that our Church is built on the apostles and prophets, Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, are asking our members to belong or contribute to an institution whose conductors would most assuredly not preach, collect, or subscribe to our old societies. Is this wise? I mean wise in the large and most general acceptation of the word 'wisdom.' Not short-sighted worldly wisdom, but real Christian wisdom. Again, I say I trow not; and yet if I were to say as much publicly, the dissenters would call me a bigot. Yet I am not so; and some one ought to remind ——— that he owes his first obligations, as do all sincere Churchmen, to their own Church and her societies."

It is now time to record the leading movements and incidents of Mr. Herbert's life from June 1803 to 1820. From 1803 to 1807 he continued to exercise the varied and important duties entrusted to his care in the large and populous parish near London, where he carried on his successful public conversations with one of the dissenting teachers, and where he also exerted himself to oppose the progress of infidelity and deism. In the latter year a long and severe illness rendered him physically incapable of attending to his duties any longer, but when all his earth's summer joys seemed

vanished, and the fields of this life appeared flowerless or chill, his heart was oft found singing in a Christian's more sunny day; and when winter without was dreary, his heart could warble a lovely and a pious lay. Though suffering from sadness and afflictions, his harp was neither silent nor untuned, for *his* harp was that of a Christian, and *his* music was that of the soul. Often did he assure those who watched his every sorrow with anxiety and grief, that he had no cause for sadness, that his heart had reason to be joyful, that he most grieved that his heart was cold; and was able to receive his afflictions with gratitude to Him, who, by the best of all his gifts, had proved to his doubting, tempted heart, that *his God was love*.

The year 1808 was one either of suffering or gradual convalescence, and it was not till the summer of 1809 that he was once more enabled to undertake the duties of a parish on the English borders of Scotland. He had various reasons for accepting this offer. A cool and rather bracing air was recommended, as most suitable for both himself and Mrs. Herbert; he was attached to the border scenery; the curacy afforded him was not too fatiguing, and would admit of his carrying a project he had long

cherished, into effect, of comparing the Presbyterian Church of Scotland with the Episcopal Church of England; not merely in their constitutions, for with those he was well acquainted, but in their workings and bearings, their influences and results. In the curacy in question he became acquainted with all he desired, formed friendships with many able and excellent men, and came to the decision that the Church Establishment most adapted to *Scotland* was, perhaps, that of the old Presbyteral Church, whilst Episcopacy was in every respect the one most suited to old England. He found that the Church of Scotland had as violent enemies on the *north* of the Tweed, as the Church of England had on the *south*, and that the former was accused by the Scotch dissenters of being impure, of having no spiritual head, of supporting Popery and prelacy, of encouraging war and bloodshed, of having a faulty and bad creed, of being tyrannical to seceders from her, of being corrupt, and of her clergy regulating their conduct to please the court. He found that the dissenters in Scotland were as furious, worldly, and bigoted as those in England, and that history was metamorphosed into roman

that a strong case might be made out against the Scottish Church and its clergy. He found that as patronage existed in the English, so it did in the Scotch Church; and that though established, abolished, restored, modified, and then enforced again, that notwithstanding its Presbyterian, instead of Episcopal character, nothing in the shape of patronage or endowment could be tolerated by Scotch separatists. He found that, as the Church of England had sought to preserve the English from error, schism, and heresy, and to secure to them a pure faith, a religious education, and Christian knowledge, so that, in 1704, the Scotch Church ordained that synods and presbyteries should carefully observe that no one should be allowed to vent any Arian or Socinian errors; that presbyteries should collect money for the establishment of Highland schools; that a new edition of the Irish or Gaelic Bible should be translated into that language; that a school should be erected in every parish, and the youth of Scotland should be properly taught in both schools and colleges. He found that care was taken not to license or ordain rashly any candidates for the ministry whose qualifications were doubtful; and that as early as 1709 the erection of a

society for propagating Christian knowledge in the Highlands was urged as an important duty. He found the parochial principle in operation, an orthodox and vigorous Church Establishment at work, and a faithful and zealous priesthood exerting all their talents, influence, and piety in behalf of the flocks committed to their care. Though he greatly preferred Episcopacy to Presbyterianism, and the hierarchy of the Church of England to the presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies of the Scottish Church, yet he felt more than ever that Scotch dissenters and separatists of all classes, whether burghers or anti-burghers, Scotch Independents or Scotch Baptists, were all imbued with the same spirit as that which unhappily actuated the English separatists from the Church of that country. A curious specimen of the intolerance of Scotch dissenters occurred to him in 1812, whilst performing the duties of his border parish.

A Scotchman—a traveller—a commercial man—feeling himself much indisposed and unable to proceed on his journey, alighted at the small, very small inn which stood opposite the church of Mr. Herbert. It was on Friday afternoon that his illness commenced, and the

fever made such rapid progress, that the master of the inn, as well as the medical attendant, who inhabited a small town about three miles distant, counselled the very seriously indisposed traveller to have the visit of a minister and to prepare for the worst. Mr. Herbert was sent for. The symptoms appeared to be alarming, and he knelt down and said, reading from his Prayer-book, "Remember not, Lord, our iniquities, nor the iniquities of our forefathers. Spare us, good Lord."

"No, no," said the sick man, with a feeble voice, but in the broadest Scotch accent, "That will not do; if I am to die, let me die; but it shall never be said that the descendant of a Puritan died in the faith of an *endowed* church, and submitted his faith to the care of a foreign priest."

There was something so decided in his manner when he said this, that Mr. Herbert felt himself interdicted from continuing the *office for the sick*; and, rising from his knees, assured the Scotch dissenter that he had no desire to violate the dictates of his conscience.

The landlord was summoned to the bedside.

"I told you I consented to see a *minister*,

but I did not ask to see a priest," said the traveller; "I am an enemy to priestcraft."

Mr. Herbert retired; and the traveller got better and pursued his journey.

The history of the Scotch Independents, taking their rise in Sandemanianism, then changed to Rowland-Hill-ism, and subsequently to Congregationalism, is curious and instructive. Originally approving the constitution of the National Church, they were not dissenters, but by degrees English influence, and English capital too, were brought to bear, and Scotch Independency at length made a near approach to that of the English. Mr. Henry Davidson, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Smith, Mr. Robert Ferrier, and Mr. David Dale (the introducer into Scotland of Arkwright's machinery), were the founders of the new sect of Scotch Independents, and they joined the Inghamites of England. Mr. George Moir condensed all former plans into one; the celebrated Rowland Hill lent also his name and peculiarities to the new schism; and Messrs. Haldane and Dr. Wardlaw, completed the rest. The Doctor, and a Mr. Ewing, founded a Scotch Independent Seminary; a Congregational Union has been formed to assist the



preachers ; the Highlands and North Western Isles are visited by Independent itinerants ; and, regardless of all discipline, of all synods, and of all authority, they hold *weekly* sacraments, invade all parishes, are indifferent to all the varied positions of the populations as well as of their regular ministers, and proclaim that they *alone* preach the Gospel in Scotland.

When Mr. Herbert was residing in the border country, he watched the movements thus pointed out, and was fully satisfied that dissenterism in Scotland possessed all those characteristics of violence, hate, ignorance, and prejudice, which have invariably distinguished it, both in England and Ireland. The sect of Scotch Independents is neither numerous, influential, nor eminently pious. With some of the vagaries, but without the deep piety of the Puritans, they attack the kirk of Scotland, denounce all religionists who do not hold their crude and undigested anomalies, and are hindrances to the advancement of truth, rather than enlightened auxiliaries. They can boast, indeed, of *one* man of great ability in their ranks—Ralph Wardlaw—and but of one, as if “to render their darkness yet more visible.”

The year 1809 was marked by an event

which the dissenters represented as *most important*, and of which they availed themselves to raise a faint and partial cry hostile to Church Establishments in this country. The French usurper had signed at Rome a decree, declaring that the union of spiritual with temporal power, was unwise and mischievous; and the dissenters hailed this announcement with rapture. Though professing a vast attachment to the principles of civil and religious liberty, they supported the cause of usurpation in France, and the violent and unprincipled aggression made by Napoleon on the Pope's domains. Their enmity to the English Church was the source of all their conduct, and the real cause of all their joy. They hoped that the example of the French emperor would tend to further that system of opposition to the Church, which they had been secretly organizing, and they did little short of worshipping the man who was yet of no religion at all—an equal enemy to Romanism and Protestantism. But what cared they for this fact, which ought to have prevented all Christians from applauding the decision of Napoleon Bonaparte? Lord Holland concurred in their views; the Whigs were favourable to their idol's measures; and the

Independents, both Scotch and English, joined with infidels and deists, in schemes for future attacks on the Established religions of both countries.

Mr. Herbert removed, in 1809, to London; took the charge, as curate, of a considerable parish; and was once more called on to assist in fighting the battles of the Church. Thrown much into the society of the Bishop of Lincoln, he found that the dissenters were organizing plans for the erection of small chapels, or for the opening of rooms for worship in all the great parishes of the kingdom, in order to oppose, with increased vehemence, the clergy of the Established Church, and to introduce heresy into every corner of the land. Dr. Pretyman, who was a zealous Churchman, thought that he also perceived, on the part of the evangelical clergy, a tendency to favour instead of to oppose these attacks on the old Anglican Church; and Mr. Pitt, and afterwards Lord Sidmouth, concurred in that opinion. They were mistaken; but that mistake was, at least, honest and sincere. What was to be done? Were dissenters to be encouraged in these attacks, or was the Church to be defended? Having already yielded up some of the out-

works, was the citadel now to be abandoned? And yet was true and undefiled religion likely to suffer from any measures of reprisal? These were perplexing questions. Mr. Herbert was prepared for their discussion. He had watched dissenterism *at work*, both in England, Wales, and Scotland. He had seen it everywhere aggressive, violent, and reproachful. He was satisfied, not merely from a perfect knowledge of its fundamental principles, but likewise from the practical evils of dissent which had come under his own more immediate observation, that the Church had every thing to fear, and nothing to hope from quietness and submission. He knew and felt that if the Church should yield one inch of its position, ere long the whole of its ground would be contested. He perceived, with the eye of one who anticipates rather than waits for future events, that dissenterism was gathering to itself new strength, new agents, and new alliances, and that, unless the Church should demonstrate by some bold and vigorous measures, that it would not submit to any further encroachments and dictation, a battle between it and the separatists would have to be fought, the consequences of which no one could, of course, accu-

rately foresee, and the evils of which no one could fully apprehend. The Church, however, was then, as it is still, destitute of statistics, and *Lord Sidmouth* undertook to supply them. Who were dissenters? What were their numbers, their names, their various categories? This was the first step to be taken. Lord Sidmouth moved for a return of the number of persons who had obtained licences to become dissenting ministers during the last fifty years. This was the preliminary proceeding. From every portion of every diocese, complaints had reached all the English bishops that field-preaching, out-of-door preaching, violent and sectarian preaching, was becoming common; that the dissenters were bestirring themselves in every direction; that the success of Napoleon in Italy and France, had encouraged the enemies to the National religion in England; and that licences became much more frequently applied for than in former years. The Church, therefore, applied to the State for facts; and the State, aided by the legislature, supplied them. The civil power had received complaints of another description, but also arising out of the existence of dissent. It had been informed that very many persons, to escape from bearing

civil burthens, and from performing civil duties, had falsely registered themselves as dissenting teachers, and had thus escaped the operation of the laws of the land. This double class of evils was not to be endured, and Lord Sidmouth moved for those returns which so much annoyed and roused the dissenters. If the clergy of the Church of England had then organized, in every county, movements in favour of some wise and moderate measure, not for preventing the free exercise of conscience, but for defending the Church against the attacks of those who separated from her; and if, instead of the bill of Lord Sidmouth, which alarmed some of the clergy who were the most favourable to dissenters, as well as the dissenters themselves; and above all, if pains had been taken to convince the Wesleyan Methodists that so long as they would conform to the discipline of their founder, no attempt would be made to annoy or interfere with them, that triumph over the Church would have been prevented, which sectarists afterwards gained, as well as those varied measures since passed by the legislature, inimical to the National religion. Unfortunately, the Wesleyans were not understood. Because the clergy saw them springing up

everywhere in their parishes, they imagined that they were dissenters and enemies ; whereas, if attempts had been made to incorporate them with the Church, nothing would then have been less difficult. Alas ! this question of the Wesleyans has always been misunderstood, and never been grappled with, till, at length, that mighty body exists separate and distinct from a Church, of which all ought to have been members. The fate of Lord Sidmouth's Bill did not astonish Mr. Herbert. All the truth was on one side, the Church ; but all the declamation was on the side of dissent. No trouble was taken, either by clergy or Church laity, to pass the bill ; but every weapon was set to work, however unhallowed and worldly, to secure its rejection. Meetings, petitions, resolutions, pamphlets, were all signed, held, and circulated, whilst the members of the Church of England left the bill to its fate, and sought neither to improve, change, or support it. The bill of Lord Sidmouth, as rejected, was, in that form, and to that extent, objectionable ; but Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor, Dr. Pretyman, and Lord Sidmouth, as well as some others, were right when they said and felt, that *that* was the moment to prevent by wise and

firm, energetic but mild measures, the spread of dissent. A large body of old Nonconformists were then living, who were averse to the new schools of zealous, but blind and weak-minded dissenters, and would have aided in any measure which could have secured to their bodies a better race of teachers. This was all that was really required. The Church had nothing to fear from the descendants of Howe, Baxter, Doddridge, and Watts, but only from the rising sects springing from seminaries of half-educated Independents. If, instead of Lord Sidmouth's Bill, a measure had been brought in for founding a *permanent Board of Dissenting Commissioners*, to examine candidates for admission to the office of ministers of their own body, the members of such Board to have been appointed by the Crown, and all vacancies filled up by it as the members of the Commission died off or resigned; if those members had been well selected and salaried for the execution of their duties; and if the bill had provided that no person should thereafter be entitled to preach or teach who had not been so examined, and procured a certificate of his aptitude and qualifications, from the head Dissenting Board; a modest, loyal, humble, well-



instructed race of dissenting teachers would have been formed, who would, indeed, have remained Nonconformists, but would not have resembled the majority of the present dissenting ministers in their violent and unchristian attacks on the National faith.

The history of Lord Sidmouth's Bill has never been fairly written. The dissenters have not written it fairly, because they only viewed it as a measure unfavourable to their unrestrained liberty of thought and action against the Church. And Episcopalians have not written it at all, because all the official documents, both of the Church and State, which gave rise to the proceeding, have not come under the examination of any modern historian. Of this measure it may however be said, that it originated with those who were on the one hand the best informed as to dissenting pretensions, and on the other hand, most anxious to steer a middle and safe course between bigotry and latitudinarianism. The failure of the measure was an incalculable evil, not because the bill was either wise or perfect, but because its defeat led to the intolerable and factious measures afterwards demanded, and even passed. The failure was to be attributed: 1st, To the ignorance of the

public mind generally as to the objects and operations of dissenters, and especially of their chiefs; 2nd, To misapprehensions on the part of the public, as to the real objects proposed by the bill; 3rd, To a want of energy and zeal on the part of the clergy of the Establishment; 4th, To a series of false statements published by the dissenters, and which obtained general credence; 5th, To prodigious efforts on the part of the dissenting committees in London; 6th, To want of support to the measure on the part of the government; and 7th, To the unprepared state of almost all parties for a measure of so decided a character, since but few were aware of the real objects proposed to be accomplished by the dissenters. It has since been demonstrated by facts, that Lord Sidmouth and a few others, and amongst them Mr. Herbert, were but too well instructed as to the intentions of the then dissenters of England; and those facts have also shown that if at that time strong protective measures had been adopted, the position of the Church of England would have been very different to that which it possesses at the present moment.

In vain did Mr. Herbert seek to rouse his clerical brethren to a feeling in favour of some

remedial measure. In vain did he labour to convince them that dissenters were secretly aiming for equality with the Church, if not for supremacy; Lord Sidmouth was blamed for "making too much of dissent;" Churchmen said, that "dissent had nothing formidable in it;" and whilst Lord Liverpool "apprehended that passing such a measure would produce much mischief," the then Archbishop of Canterbury allowed himself to be influenced by the number of sheets of parchment, called petitions, which were got up to alarm the Upper House of Parliament. No one proposed another, or a milder measure; no one came forward to meet vast and prodigious evils; but the bill was thrown out, and the voluntary principle triumphed. When the measure was rejected, and when dissent assumed everywhere the tone and language of faction and discontent, the clergy in the country parishes felt sore and annoyed, and some of them sought, by enforcing the terms of the *Conventicle Act*, to revenge themselves for recent defeat. But such conduct was both tardy and unwise; and the dissenters obtained a bill which virtually exempted their ministers from taking the oath of allegiance, which admitted as a *right* unlimited

registration of dissenting meeting-houses, thus placing conventicles on the same footing as chapels of ease, and which not only recognized but really sanctioned the *principle* of separation. The moment selected by Lord Sidmouth for proposing his measure showed that he was well informed as to the varied movements of the dissenting body; for from 1812 to the present period, the dissenters have invariably acted towards the Church in a spirit of aggression, and have no longer sought to conceal their vehement and continued hostility. If, at the period just referred to, Churchmen had done their duty, some measure would have passed, which, whilst it would have secured to dissenters the free exercise of the rights of conscience, would have preserved the country from the evils of a political and multiform dissent.

Besides performing with zeal and affection his varied parochial duties as an active and laborious minister of the Established Church, Mr. Herbert also supported her journals by his pen, defended the Thirty-nine Articles in her reviews, and engaged heart and soul in all questions which affected her glory, usefulness, and evangelical character. Belonging to no one party in the Church, but loving all real

Christians in that communion, whatever were the diversity of opinions they held on secondary points, he never forgot that he was a Churchman ; that he owed his allegiance to her constitution, hierarchy, discipline, creeds, liturgy, and worship; and whilst he aimed at the "*suaviter in modo*," he could, when necessary, exemplify the "*fortiter in re*." At many periods of his long and valuable life he was called on to put in practice this portion of his character, but never was his firmness more exemplified than on the following important occasion.

In the London parish where Mr. Herbert officiated from 1810 to 1818, he had, amongst other evils, to contend with a *dissenting churchwarden*. Wealthy, vulgar, impertinent, cunning, and possessed of that low wit which disregards persons, dignities, and positions, when it seeks to gratify its love of jokes at all that is conservative, ancient, respectable, or venerable, Mr. Prosser was the *beau ideal* of a sectarian layman. A silversmith by trade, he had gained a large portion of his fortune by foreign speculations, and had contrived to retire at fifty years of age on a fortune which was larger than generally falls to the lot of a straight-forward tradesman. Mr. Prosser was

selected as the *parish* churchwarden by a factious majority of five at an Easter vestry, not for his love of the Church, but for his aversion to the Establishment; and in return for this compliment to sectarianism, he promised "that he would soon show the rector and his curate what it was to have a vigilant and decided churchwarden." Mr. Herbert heard with attention, but without displaying any emotion, the declaration of Mr. Prosser. As he had always done his duty, he had nothing to apprehend from one, who was not only ignorant but impatient—impatient for power, and restless for office, and who would be unable to bring to the aid of his aversion to the Church, either dignity or wisdom.

"My name is William Prosser, *Esquire*," said the little ex-silversmith as he walked into the front parlour of the rectory on the very next morning; "I am appointed to the important post in this parish, Sir, of churchwarden, and I am resolved to discharge those duties without fear, affection, or malice. I have called on you, Sir, to beg you will communicate these facts to the rector, as well as to make you acquainted with them yourself. I have no wish to interfere with you, Sir, in the *religious* part

of your functions, but on all other matters my fellow-parishioners have relied on me for my zealous watchfulness, and they will not rely in vain."

Mr. Herbert beheld before him a little man, about five feet seven inches high, accoutered in a blue coat, with best gilt buttons, a white waistcoat, buckskin breeches, top-boots, a well-powdered but small and insignificant head, but a coat collar over which swept a *pigtail*. His rotundity bore no proportion to his height, for he was distinguished for his *embonpoint*, and vulgarity but cleverness were its accompaniments. Mr. Herbert eyed him with a look of surprise, and said,

"Ah! so you are Mr. Prosser—the new churchwarden—very good, Sir; I hope we shall have no reason to complain of each other."

Mr. Prosser was evidently disappointed. He hoped either for reproach or submission, for a scolding or for some proof that Mr. Herbert was deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of the man who was then in his presence: but he had neither reproach nor submission; neither a scolding nor obeisance; and William Prosser, *Esquire*, was deeply annoyed.

"It is my intention, Sir, to institute a

narrow investigation into the revenues of the rectory ; into the endowments of the parish ; into the tithes, church-rates, and Easter offerings ; fees for christenings, marriages, and burials ; into the church charities, the parish charities, the parochial schools ; and, in one word, into every thing."

"Indeed, Sir," replied Mr. Herbert, with chilling irony ; "but you have not mentioned into the destitute state of the parish, as to churches, the deplorable want of church-room, the overpowering duties devolving on the curates, the sad state of dilapidation of our central church, the ruinous condition of our parish vaults, the indispensable necessity for increasing our parish church-yard, the want we have of a new church clock, the bad state of our belfry, and the meagre allowance made to our *afternoon lecturer*. A little attention on your part to these topics may be very serviceable, Mr. Churchwarden."

"All this is no business of mine, Sir," said Mr. Prosser, with the air of a man who had just consulted the vestry clerk, as to what were his duties, and who had been as ill-informed as himself ; "I know my duties, and knowing will perform them."



“ If I can be of any service to you, Mr. Prosser, in making you *better* acquainted with them than you *appear* to be at present,” answered Mr. Herbert, dryly, “ it will afford me much pleasure.”

“ I believe I shall have no occasion to trouble you, Mr. Curate, on that head, for my friend Mr. Cutts is well versed in these matters; and, besides which, I am a friend of Dr. Lackington, the great man at the Ecclesiastical Courts, and a most zealous friend of *all* dissenters.”

“ An admirable eulogium on your friend,” replied Mr. Herbert, with a *sang-froid* which disturbed his antagonist; “ but do *dissenting* deacons consult *Church* authorities, Mr. Churchwarden?”

This was too home a thrust even for poor Mr. Prosser not to comprehend, and he grew “ fractious.”

“ I shall begin with the mortuary and other fees,” said Mr. Prosser. “ Indeed!” retorted Mr. Herbert; and the new churchwarden retreated.

When the churchwarden had gone through all the preliminaries to office, he entered on what he styled “ his *arduous and important*

*duties,*” and began by getting up a requisition for a vestry, “to take into consideration the necessity for making some amendments in the fees payable to the rector for baptisms, marriages, and burials.” There was no difficulty in obtaining the necessary number of signatures to any paper like this, from dissenting bakers, hatters, tailors, and coal-merchants;—and so the vestry was called. Passion, however, was defeated by reason, violence by argument, and revolt by firmness, and Mr. Churchwarden Prosser wholly failed in his first manoeuvre.

“I never see you at church,” said Mr Herbert, with more than usual seriousness, Churchwarden Prosser, when the latter called to announce to him his intention of examining the sacramental plate, parochial registers, and accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the sacramental offerings at the communion-table; “and I feel it my duty to add, Sir, that I can have no official communications with a *churchwarden*, who neglects the ritual of his *Church*, disregards the Rubric, is in a state of opposition to her laws, and lives estranged from her altar. I hope, Mr. Prosser, that these things will be speedily corrected, and that no ecclesiastical discipline will become necessary.”

“ Ecclesiastical discipline, indeed,” repeated Mr. Prosser; “ ecclesiastical nonsense. Do you think, Mr. Curate, that I care for your Church courts]one pin’s head? Do you suppose that any man can be made to attend a parish church against his conscience? I have the honour, Sir, to be a *Protestant dissenter*, of the *Particular Baptist denomination*, and do you suppose I would lose my time, and violate my conscience, in attending at your church, when I can hear the Gospel preached by my pastor, Mr. *Mildew*? No, Sir; I am *churchwarden*, because I am *warden* of the *church*, but nothing further; and you will never see me at our communion-table, or in the churchwarden’s pew, except when charity sermons shall be preached for *Lancasterian* schools, or for other such objects as my conscience may approve.”

“ The law, Mr. Prosser, the law of the land, requires your attendance at the parish church, and you must resign an office which, as a dissenter, you have no right to fill, or you must conform to the laws of a Church, whose interests you have promised to defend.”

“ I shall do neither the one nor the other, Mr. Curate,” retorted the dissenting church-

warden ; “ but if any attempt of that description should be made, shall apply to the new society for protecting *religious liberty*, and it will defend my rights, without fee or remuneration.” So the parties separated, and Mr. Prosser sent in his “ *case*” to the committee. The “ *case*” stated, that Mr. Prosser was a *conscientious* dissenter ; that he had accepted the post of *churchwarden*, to which his fellow-parishioners had appointed him ; that he had resolved “ to sweep out the *augéan* stable ;” that, in the exercise of his arduous duties, he had experienced much opposition from the curate, acting, no doubt, under the advice of the rector ; and that as he was now threatened with pains and penalties, if he did not attend the parish church, he applied to the committee for advice and *protection*.” At the next monthly meeting the committee resolved,

“ That this committee, feeling more than ever, the necessity for protecting all classes from clerical domination and magisterial oppression, does not hesitate to assure William Prosser, Esq., one of the churchwardens of the parish of ———, that most joyfully will it defend him against any attempts which may be made to enforce an obsolete and intolerant law, requiring his attendance at the parish

church; that it has heard with feelings of indignation and horror, that any attempt to revive such a law should now be threatened; that it counsels him by no means to resign his post of churchwarden, *and on no account to attend at the parish church*, but in his own person to try the question with an usurping and intolerant State religion, whether a Protestant dissenter, because nominated a *churchwarden*, is really compellable to attend at the *church*, whose affairs he is appointed to conduct; and, finally, that if such attempt shall be made, the opinion of Dr. Lackington, the honest and uncompromising friend of *all dissenters*, be taken without delay."

"There, Mr. Curate, what do you think of that?" asked Mr. Prosser, at a vestry meeting summoned to make a poor-rate for the parish; "and now, after the resolution of the committee of religious liberty, *I defy all your threats*, and am prepared for all your measures."

Mr. Herbert did not allow himself to be provoked into either an unkind speech or action; but as the dissenting churchwarden, in the sequel, sought to injure the Church, disturb the clergy, made false reports to both rector and bishop, and laboured to introduce the *voluntary principle* into the Church of England, he took the necessary steps for silencing his

clamour, reproving his inattention, punishing his disobedience both to civil and canon law, and finally caused him to be suspended in the execution, or rather non-execution of his duties. Eventually "*the Society*" was defeated, the dissenters were taught that the Church has a discipline which cannot be disregarded with impunity, and a new churchwarden was elected, who remembered the importance of his office, and the duty he owed to that Church of which he had the privilege and honour of being a pious as well as enlightened member. Such results may *always* be anticipated when the clergy are faithful to themselves, and to the laws and discipline of the Church of which they are members.

The year 1819 was one of a most painful and depressing character to Mr. Herbert. Domestic afflictions had seldom assailed him ; and no one felt more grateful than he did, for the health and peace they had so long enjoyed. Two children had been the fruit of his marriage ; and their habits, attainments, and principles had been to him sources of unbounded joy. True religion had sanctified all their pleasures, abundantly supplied the lack of many a temporal need, and sweetened those endearing associations which

are among the best and most hallowed of our being. Though married somewhat later in life than is ordinarily desirable for a member of the clerical profession, his heart had found all it desired in the affectionate and sweet converse of one, who owed her conversion to the instrumentality of the being whose wife she afterwards became, and who added to her filial, conjugal, and domestic virtues, the ornaments and graces of a sincere Christian. Attached to the Church, informed as to her ritual, offices, doctrines, and duties, she visited the sick, instructed the ignorant, relieved the wretched, and carried into every society, as into every cabin, the odour of a pure and vital godliness. Her's was that charity which thinketh no evil, rejoicing not in iniquity, but rejoicing in the truth. But the past was gone: sad sickness now pallied her cheeks—hectic flushes now spoke of disease; whilst pain withered her frame, and reminded her that she also must gather up her feet and be counted with the dead. Yes, with the dead! This was death, or nearly so, to Mr. Herbert himself; and when her last words met his ears, “I die in peace,” and her last breath met his fevered and trembling lips, he forgot all the years of joy the

most pure, and affection the most lively, and happiness the most unadulterated, which had gone—and was absorbed by that feeling which, alas! even the best of Christians experience, allowing gratitude for past enjoyments to be effaced by present grief.

How soon, when our path is o'ershaded by sorrow,  
We forget the late sunshine of gladness ;  
Or only recall the bright contrast, to borrow  
A deeper impression of sadness !

How soon, when the friend of our bosom has vanish'd,  
And death has embalmed our affection,       •  
The sweet hours we tasted together are banished,  
By heart-ache and withering reflection.

E'en thus, when returns the dark, leafless December,  
All nature to dreariness dooming ;  
Thy paradise, Summer, no more we remember,  
That lately around us was blooming

But in yonder bright world (and with stedfast endeavour  
I fain would be travelling thither)  
No grief chases gladness, no death can dissever,  
No winter the paradise wither.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### A CHAPTER ABOUT THE CHURCH.

MR. HERBERT'S EIGHTIETH BIRTH-DAY—HIS LOVE FOR THE CHURCH—STATE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN 1830—SOME CLERGY ARE HALF DISSENTERS—ATTENTION TO SACRAMENTS—PREACHING—THE BIBLE—REASONS FOR THE INCREASE OF DISSENT—DISSENTERISM IN THE CHURCH—AFTERNOON LECTURERS—SERMONS—CATHOLIC ANTIQUITY—INATTENTION TO THE RUBRIC—KNEELING NEGLECTED—RESPONSES NEGLECTED—SINGING NEGLECTED—WEEK-DAY SERVICES NEGLECTED—RUBRIC DIRECTIONS AS TO THE COMMUNION NEGLECTED—HOLIDAYS AND FAST DAYS NEGLECTED—HOMILIES NEGLECTED—SERVICES TWICE A SUNDAY NEGLECTED—ALTERNATE SERMONS—DISOBEDIENCE TO THE RUBRIC RELATIVE TO PUBLIC BAPTISM—IGNORANCE OF CANDIDATES FOR CONFIRMATION—CHILDREN NOT CATECHISED IN PUBLIC—THE RUBRIC NEGLECTED AS TO SICK PERSONS—UNBAPTIZED PERSONS BURIED AS BAPTIZED PERSONS—THE CHURCHING OF WOMEN NEGLECTED—PENANCE OR REPENTANCE—UNITY OF CHURCH NEGLECTED—APOSTOLICAL MINISTRY DISREGARDED—DANGER OF EXTREMES—EVILS OF LANCASTERIAN SCHOOLS—CHURCH DISCIPLINE NEGLECTED—LOVE OF NOVELTY—UNION OF THE CLERGY REQUIRED—THE CLERGY SHOULD CONVOKE THE LAITY MONTHLY—SPIRITUAL FUNCTIONS SHOULD NOT BE DISCHARGED BY PROXY—PROGRESS OF CHURCH SOCIETIES—GENERAL PLANS FOR CHURCH EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENT.

“THE days of the years of thy servant are fourscore years,” said Mr. Herbert, on the morning

of the anniversary of his eightieth birth-day; “and as I retrace my steps through all the changeful ways of my past life, I can truly and thankfully exclaim, ‘Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life,’ even when most perplexed, most sad, most cast down, most tempted, and most tried; and now I can add, with the Psalmist, ‘and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.’” There was a calm and beautiful expression of devotion and heart-thankfulness observable in his aspect, tone, manner, and attitude, as he said this; and his pious fervour spread a genial and glowing influence over all assembled. *His* children and *their* children had arrived to spend a few days with the vicar, and holy festivity and godly mirth pervaded the whole scene.

“I have now been a minister of *the Church*,” he said, “for a period of fifty-five years; and oh! how thankfully do I declare that I rejoice most exceedingly at my long connection with her. I bless God for her existence, for her unity, for her constitution, for her hierarchy, for her doctrines, for her discipline, for her ordinances and sacraments, for her ritual, for her laws, for her courts, for her temples, for her cathedrals, for her apostolical succes-

sion of ordained ministers, for her church societies, for church officers, for prayer-books and homilies, for church fathers and church influence, and for church principles, embodied in the Word of God, and developed in church books, and in the writings of the church fathers, and, above all, I bless God for myself, that I possess the smallest spark of grace and the least hope of glory."

Such a moment appeared peculiarly favourable for a conversation "on the Church" with one, who was evidently approaching the happy exchange of the church militant, for the church triumphant. He knew the Church well; and he loved her as he knew her. But it was an intellectual and a moral, as well as a spiritual love. He had *studied* the Church, her early history, the practical, the social, the parochial bearings of her institutions, and how valuable was the opinion of such a man, at a moment when, reviewing from the borders of the grave his past connection with her, he could rejoice thereat with unfeigned joy, and, with a lively hope and well-grounded assurance, could exclaim, "The Church of Christ in England, Sir, was founded at Calvary, at the foot of that cross, which is all our salvation and all our

hope, and after a long period of wanderings and persecutions, of sorrowings and successes, of joy, hope, fear, martyrdom, error, backsliding, formality, and then of vital godliness and energetic piety, this same church shall find herself at last, and for ever, in the eternal Canaan, at the foot of the same cross, but with an ever-living and glorified Redeemer."

*Biographer.* What is your opinion, Sir, of the present state (in 1830) of the Church in this country?

*Vicar.* That is a very large and general question; but as we may never all meet again upon earth, I will endeavour, as briefly as possible, to answer your inquiry. The Church in England, Sir, is just now in a state of *transition*. I do not speak of her *property*, so ignorantly complained of, when she is the poorest Church (of the same extent) in Christendom; but I speak of her *principles*, and of her *discipline*. When I first commenced my labours in the Church, there was a vast deal of coldness, deadness, and formality amongst her members as to doctrines; but the principles of the clergy were Church principles, though not sufficiently cared about, and the discipline was still kept up with even some severity. Wesley,

Whitefield, Hervey, Romaine, Rowland Hill, Lady Huntingdon, and many others were instrumental in rousing the attention of the clergy to Church *doctrines*, and by degrees the *doctrines* preached, have become wholly apostolical. But whilst the clergy have advanced in their *doctrines* they have retrograded in their Church *principles*, the first of which is, *attention to the sacraments*. From paying a too exclusive attention to *sacraments*, very little of late years (during the last thirty years at any rate) has been paid by any, whether clergy or laity; and whilst our churches are crowded with hearers, our communion-tables are often unsurrounded by communicants. This state of things cannot last. God will never bless a Church where doctrines supersede sacraments, or where sacraments take the place of doctrines. And as the Church has in her constitution a self-preserving and self-restoring principle; as the exercise of the dormant powers with which the system of the Church is instant for the healing of the age, has only to be brought to bear; there must and will be a reaction in men's minds in favour of Church principles, which may, perhaps, from the weakness and frailty of man in his very best doings, proceed

too far, but which will afterwards be softened down into a healthy and vigorous state of attention to doctrines, sacraments, and offices. In consequence of the attention which has been paid by dissenters and Methodists during the last fifty or sixty years to their “*one*” means of grace, preaching, a habit or usage has sprung up in the Church of endeavouring to put down schism by the very same means by which it has been promoted. This is *not* of Christ, but of man. In many places where there are large congregations the prayers are read slovenly. The sacraments are administered coldly. The churches are crowded to hear *popular* preachers; and *doctrines* have taken the place of *duties and sacraments, offices and discipline*, as formerly the latter usurped that of the former; and the Church needs arousing. *How* this will be brought about, I know not; but it *will* be brought about. A sad fashion is now coming into vogue, Sir, with some excellent men in the Church, but who, alas! have forgotten the *unity* not only of the doctrines, but of the sacraments, offices, worship, and discipline, and that is, to be rather ashamed than otherwise of being regarded as “*the*” clergy of “*the*” Church. In their

charity towards all men, and their love of winning souls, they really seem to wish to be more "liberal" than were Christ and his apostles, and are rather offended than otherwise if suspected of being *exclusive*. On the other hand, Sir, I know some of my brethren, who seem to forget that the Church is based on the Scriptures—and *ONLY* on the Scriptures; that the Nicene Creed must not take the place of the Apostolic Church; that the *Church* is not the primary authority in morals, but that the *Word of God* is such authority; that the Church is *not* the only medium of communication with the apostles, for we have their *written* testimony, which is to be preferred to that which is oral; that the creed is not to take the place of Scripture, and that the liturgies and formularies of the Church are *not* to test scriptural doctrines, but that scriptural doctrines are to test them; that Christian morals should be grounded upon the doctrines of the Gospel, and not on the ordinances of the Church; that superstition is not really better than indifference or fanaticism—since God looks at the heart, and when forms are substituted for faith, he is dissatisfied and angry; that the whole superstructure of Christian ethics does *not* rest on the

sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and that whilst Baptism is spoken of as a sacred, solemn, and binding ordinance, which has of late years been awfully neglected both by clergy and laity, yet that "the scripture which affirms that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," does not affirm that he that is *not* baptized, but only that he who *believeth not*, shall be damned. On the other hand, the levelling dogmas of the revolutionary school in Europe, the infidel *philosophy* (impiously so called) of the great unbelievers of the last century, the spread of a love of novelty, a curious desire to fathom the mysteries of providence and grace, an aversion to restraint and authority, and the erection of the private judgment of man into the place of the wisdom of antiquity, have rendered men seekers after systems, instead of obeyers and practisers of the Gospel, and have led to dissent in its various forms, from Deism and Universalism to Socinianism, Southcottianism, and the various other "isms" which distract the minds and ruin the hearts of men. All these sects and parties unite in opposing all "authority"—and no one of them will "hear the Church." I am aware that many dissenters are so, because their spiritual neces-



sities were unprovided for by the State, but having become dissenters, they now are the loudest in their eulogies on *preachers* and *preaching*, and treat the sacraments as *mere* outward signs, which they therefore disregard, or attend to, at their pleasure.

There is a great deal of dissenterism in the Church, Sir, to-day; and this must be got rid of. It is not from God, but from man. I will explain what I mean. 1st, I mean the whole system of parochial canvassings and elections of afternoon lecturers. This is lamentable. I am acquainted with the curate of a parish in London, who applied to become the lecturer. He was opposed; the *dissenters* sought a candidate; they found a pious man, no doubt, but a *very low Churchman*, and he allowed himself to be their stalking-horse. Public-houses were opened for the dissenting candidate, placards were stuck on the walls, hackney-coaches were hired, speeches and tavern entertainments were all resorted to, and dissenterism triumphed. What a defeat! But, 2nd, I mean the undue, because *exclusive* importance attached to sermons. Many of our large churches, Sir, are half empty of a Sunday morning, up to the time of the commencement of the Litany, and

then the parishioners "*drop in*," just in time for the sermon. By the time the sermon begins, the church is full; but that over, the pew doors begin to open, even before the benediction is pronounced. Now, though by the preaching of the Gospel, Christ determined to make known the truth of his religion, he established sacraments as evidences of discipleship, or as initiatory to it. These sacraments have been awfully neglected; and there *will* be, there *must* be a reaction in their favour. I have often officiated at churches in large parishes, where so great has been the neglect of the Holy Communion, that not forty persons, out of a population of twenty thousand, have attended to communicate. Yet the churches have been filled in these parishes a little before sermon-time, with *apparently* attentive and even interested hearers. There is, 3rd, a want of attention to *catholic antiquity*. Whilst it is *wholly untrue* that the Bible is a dead letter without an interpreter, as some assert; it is also untrue that the Bible cannot be better understood with the aid of the writings of such men as Jewel, Hooker, Bull, and Jeremy Taylor; and yet more by those of St. Augustin, the two Clements, Cyprian, Ignatius, Tertul-

lian, Origen, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Cyril, Irenæus, Vincent of Lerens, Gennadius, Justin Martyr, Hilary, and Ambrose: and not only better understood, but more appreciated and loved. There has been at different epochs in the history of the Church in England, too much and too little stress laid on *catholic antiquity*. The fault of the present day is undoubtedly to lay *too little*. The primary source of teaching was neither the New Testament nor the Church, but Christ Jesus himself. Then came next in order the apostles; then the Holy Writings; then the fathers; and then an established priesthood, in conjunction with the canonical books and the works of the fathers. I admit that it does not follow, that because traditions were *essential* to the Church *before* the Sacred Writings were collected, therefore that traditions are binding now. It should never be lost sight of, however, that the New Testament is admitted on all hands to be the court of *final appeal*; and that the catholic fathers are rejected by the Church in England, whenever, as in the case of praying for the dead, their opinions are opposed to the decisions of revelation. There is a 4th indication of dissenterism in the Church, and that is, the *little attention*

*paid to the commands of the Rubric.* This arises, first, from inattention on the part of the people; and, second, on the part of the clergy. The general Confession should be said devoutly *kneeling*; so should the Absolution, the Lord's Prayer, the collects, and the smaller prayers; but how little is there of *kneeling* even in our small, and still less in our large congregations! The piety of our ancestors provided us with *large pews*, where kneeling was not only practicable, but pleasant. The indifference of modern days supplies no adequate room for this attitude of prostration before the majesty and glory of God. The posture of the body, Sir, is no indifferent matter in our approach to the Lord of heaven and earth. It is fitting that a creature should approach its Creator in an attitude of solemn reverence and devout adoration. The fathers of the Church were not indifferent to these matters; and the sitting, standing, leaning, irreverential postures known in these days, in too many of our churches, have their origin in the unordained and voluntary positions of dissenters. Then the *responses* are not repeated loudly, audibly, and devoutly, as was formerly the case, not only in the earlier periods of the Church's history, but even when

I first commenced my duties as a minister. We must get back to the *old orthodox true Church habits* of devoutly kneeling, and devoutly responding. Then the *singing* of God's praises in churches and chapels must be more attended to than of late it hath been. The true old Church custom of singing a hymn in the middle of the morning, and also of the evening service, has been nearly discontinued in country parishes. This is a wholly unwarrantable alteration. In the Jewish, as in the early Christian church, great attention was paid to *singing*, and it formed no inconsiderable portion of our old Catholic Ritual. This godly habit of singing psalms and hymns *by the congregation* must be re-established, for the house of God is not less one of praise than of prayer.

The *week-day* services of the Church are shamefully disregarded. This is an innovation which must be put a stop to. It is *not* enough to attend the parish church twice on a Sunday, and to neglect it all the other days of the week. There are some who think that every day in the week, both morning and evening, the services should be celebrated; and the only real objection I have ever heard to this practice is, that the parishioners will not attend.

In rural districts, it is said, the people are too far removed ; and in cities and towns they are too much occupied. But the customs of our old Catholic Church were undoubtedly in favour of the measure, and it is mournful to think that whilst the Romish churches are open every day, and nearly all the day, for prayer and praise, our Catholic temples in the country are generally unopened from Sunday to Sunday. There should be an uniform rule in all parishes in the kingdom as to *Wednesday morning services*, and such *hours* should be fixed on in *each* parish as would be favourable to the largest attendance. The commands of the Rubric as to the administration of the Lord's Supper are also lamentably neglected. Those who intend to be partakers of the Holy Communion do *not* signify their names to the minister before the day ; those who are open and notorious evil livers “ are not thus known beforehand ; ” and to prevent scandal, and even ecclesiastical suits, the clergy sometimes administer with sorrow and pain the elements of the Holy Communion to those, who thus come unawares upon them at the Lord's table. Thus the clergy also have not the opportunity afforded them of visiting and reproofing such persons, admonishing and warn-

ing them, before their appearance at the communion-table ; and those delightful and charitable directions for the reconciling of disputing parishioners, and the recompensing of aggrieved parties, are wholly unattended to. The minister of a parish in these times (1830), is a *preacher*, a registrar of baptisms, marriages, and deaths, and very little else. He is *not* the Christian father or arbitrator of the parish. And why is all this ? Because the *Rubric* is neglected. The announcement to the congregation of holidays and fast days, to be observed during the following week, is another Catholic Church usage, which has almost everywhere fallen into disuse. Why is this ? Because the Rubric is treated with contempt. Yet Christian self-denial and mortification is no small portion of Christian duty. It is an undisputed fact, that in the primitive church the mortifying of the appetites of the body by fasting and abstinence was a general practice ; and though in process of time corruptions crept in upon this, as upon other wholesome practices of the Church, yet our reformers, while they endeavoured to guard against superstitious abuse and vain distinctions, still retained, as worthy and useful to be observed, the seasons of fasting and humiliation, which were not only sanctioned by antiquity,

but also recommended by the experience of their utility. It would be worse than vain to enforce the practice of fasting on the unconverted, and the careless, pleasure-loving man; but to those who have, through mercy, received new tastes, desires, affections, and whose spirits are clogged in their heavenward flight by this body of sin and death, the means of mortifying and subduing the flesh will come in the light of a godly privilege. The neglect of the *Homilies* of the Church is another evil of modern times. How suitable are they for country congregations. How admirably adapted are they for Wednesday and for Friday services. How acceptable they would be on *Sunday afternoons*. Yet the homilies are not so much as known by three-fourths even of our church-going people. I rejoice exceedingly at the growing success of the *Prayer-book and Homily Society*, and from my heart entreat you, my dear children and grandchildren, one and all to support it. If the Rubric were better attended to, the homilies would not be so much neglected. The directions of the Rubric in case of the negligence of the parishioners to attend at the Holy Communion are likewise lamentably disregarded. How seldom, if ever, is the exhortation read, "Wherefore, most dearly beloved in Christ,



take ye good heed, lest ye withdrawing yourselves from this Holy Supper, provoke God's indignation against you." The celebration of Divine Worship only once on the Lord's day, and alternately in contiguous churches, is also a fearful evil. In a large portion of the country parishes, especially in rural districts, the prayers are read, and a sermon preached only once a day; whilst in other churches, even in some of those where Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer, Hooker, and others once proclaimed the "whole counsel of God," a sermon is preached only *every other* Sunday, and no homily is read in its place. In other dioceses, on the first Sunday of the month, when the communion is administered, no sermon or homily is read, and thus the Rubric is deplorably violated. The public baptism of infants is also celebrated, both as to time and manner, *wholly contrary to the directions of the Rubric*, and manifestly to the spiritual injury of the congregation and parish. For what is baptism, but the admission of a new member into the church of Christ? And why is this admission to take place in a corner? Why not in the face of the other members? Why not "when the most number of people come together?" Why not "when the congregation there present may testify the receiv-

ing of them that be newly baptized into the number of Christ's church?" Why not when "every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in his baptism?" *Why* is the Rubric so shamefully disregarded in all its provisions as to the *public baptism of infants*? Alas! my dear children, because dissenterism hath crept into our Church, and doctrines and preaching have, in too many cases, swept away sacraments and ordinances. The preaching of the Gospel is of immense value, but it is not every thing. The directions of the Rubric as to the solemn rite of *Confirmation* are not less frequently disobeyed. The Catechism is not known, not appreciated, not understood. I remember, on several occasions, even in my London parishes, examples of the most shocking ignorance on the part of young persons applying to be examined. On one occasion, I inquired of a youth, whose situation in life was rather above that of the middling classes, "What do you understand by *faith*?" He hesitated, reflected, and then said, "Sorrow for sin, Sir." "Then what do you mean by repentance?" I asked. This did not embarrass him at all, for he replied, "Sorrow for being found out, Sir." In a country parish where my predecessor had

paid too little attention to his catechetical duties, I inquired of a girl, about fifteen years of age, also a candidate for confirmation, "What was her *soul*?" At first she said "She could not tell;" but being pressed for *some* reply, "She *thought* it was something that went pit-a-pat, in her side, when she did wrong." They had both some very confused notions about *conscience*, but were wholly ignorant of even the *leading* truths of Christianity.

And yet how great would have been the scandal, after duly admonishing and reproving these ignorant candidates, I had refused to allow them to receive the rite! On some occasions, indeed, I have felt it an imperative duty to defer their reception of the rite till the next visitation; but in these cases they have rarely again applied to me on the subject. And a portion of this ignorance is to be traced not *merely* to the neglect of parents and guardians, but to the disobedience of the clergy and people to the command of the Rubric: "That the curate of every parish shall diligently, upon Sundays and holidays, after the second lesson of Evening Prayer, openly, in the church, instruct and examine so many children of his parish sent unto him, as he shall think conve-

nient, in some part of the Catechism." This *public* examination, in the face of the congregation, is far better calculated to excite attention and thoughtfulness than private examinations in vestries or at schools. The inattention, on the part of the people, to the directions of the Rubric in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, is deeply to be deplored. "When any person is sick," says the Rubric, "notice should be given thereof to the minister of the parish." But how many hundreds die in our small, and thousands in our large parishes, without any such notice being given. And this is one of the striking evils resulting from large and over-grown parishes, by which, instead of following out the parochial system, it is stifled or destroyed. In a parish of one or even two thousand souls, a minister *may* visit all the sick, and the parishioners *may* truly and honestly be stirred up to give that notice of any one being sick, to the curate, which the Rubric requires. But in large over-grown parishes this is impossible. No minister could visit all the sick—the inhabitants feel and know it; and he is seldom, if ever, sent for before the parishioner is "*in extremis*." The Church must get back, Sir, to primitive customs, or she will find dis-

senting teachers at the bed-sides of the sick, instead of the authorized clergy.

*The Order for the Burial of the Dead* is one of the most perfect and beautiful offices in the Church; but the directions of the Rubric are also with regard to it grossly neglected. How many *unbaptized* persons have the Order for the Burial of the Dead read over them! And not only so; but dissenters even prosecute and trouble those clergy who adhere to the Rubric! Inattention to the sacrament of baptism is thus encouraged, and that most important ordinance is woefully disregarded. The result of this state of things is *deplorable*. Whole masses of children are born without been baptized, grow up to manhood without confirmation, marry without having received the communion, and die and are buried *as Christians*, and have our glorious service read over their dead bodies, as such, although they never submitted to the sacraments and ordinances of the Catholic Church. *The thanksgiving of women after childbirth* is also lamentably neglected. This is to be attributed to two causes: 1st, to the inattention of all classes to the demands of the Rubric; and, 2nd, to the spread of dissenting doctrines. The Catholic Church fol-

lowed by its ritual every member from his birth to the grave. All positions, all ranks, all states and conditions, all periods of being were all attended to, all provided for, all watched over. Out of five hundred births in a year in a moderate parish, not fifty women attend to their churching. In some cases, indeed, this arises from deficiency of church-room, and neglect of the parochial system; but in too many cases from inattention to the Rubric. Before we can hope to see the Church cope, with success, with its sectarian opponents or enemies, we must get back to the *Rubric*.

*Biographer.* And what is your opinion, Sir, on the subject of penance?

*Vicar.* I think, Sir, that though in practice our Church may too much neglect confession, and the consequent exercise of the priestly authority, yet the opposite extreme is far more dangerous, as it converts the priesthood into the judges, not the guides of the people, since the undue influence of the Romish clergy over their flock, does in reality hinge on the necessity of absolution in ordinary cases. And yet we must remember concerning penance, or its almost equivalent term repentance, that the sacramental part consists in the absolution

given by the priest; and that absolution pronounced authoritatively to an individual, unless it be accompanied by confession, is but a mockery of religion. In order that sinners may be made partakers of the death and merits of Christ, a conviction of sin, and a humble acknowledgment of it to God, are essential; for which purpose the acknowledgment of our transgressions to the ministers of the Church is often very useful; and where the mind is troubled, the declaration of *God's* pardon to the individuals may be wisely, scripturally, and beneficially made. The Romish Church considers this as necessary for salvation. This is its error. The Romish Church confers on the priest the right of subjecting the individual, who confesses, to discipline, and this discipline is called penance. Our Church, when its ritual is observed, is more apostolical than either the Romish Church or the Erudition; it encourages repentance, confession, and scriptural absolution, but in a mitigated and not an absolute sense. We have nothing to change here, Sir, except more frequent spiritual communications between the clergy and the laity.

*Biographer.* And do you not think, Sir, that too little attention is paid to the *unity of the Church*?

houses, there would be no necessity for pluralities on the one hand, and no lack of adequate incomes on the other. Such a man as Mr. Herbert would not have then seen what was and ever will be unavoidable, whilst the *parochial system* is *not* carried out into *full practice*, many a stripling advanced by family interest to honours and duties for which he is wholly unprepared, whilst grey hairs descend to the grave in comparative want and neglect. This is not the *fault* of the Church of England : it is one of her many trials and sources of deep and sincere sorrow. It is one of the signs that she is *still*, indeed, the Church in the wilderness. If the government and legislature of this country did their duty, there would be no lack of churches, as there is at present, for millions of souls in this land ; no lack of endowments, and no lack of clergy or of adequate incomes for them. The Church cannot work miracles ; she does not profess to do so. When she had sufficient churches for the inhabitants, she accommodated all. When the inhabitants increased, she applied for more churches, and they have been refused. When the endowments of each church were sufficient, she discouraged pluralities ; but when the State robbed



the Church, then pluralities often became indispensable. When the church and endowments were adequate, all ranks of the clergy were provided for. When neither were sufficient, then virtue and merit were often, and are still often neglected; and those who are ever the most opposed to church extension, are the first to give rich livings, as they fall in, to court favourites, or to the already amply beneficed members of their own families. Look at the inadequate incomes, arising from their church livings, possessed by some of the most able and admirable men in the Establishment to-day, referring to them without distinction as to party. Were it not for their private fortunes, or for the dowries of their wives, many of them would be unable to sustain that rank in society, in which their education, as well as their profession, have placed them. If any one shall doubt the accuracy of such a statement, let him examine the Clerical Guide of 1836, and the Clergy List of 1841, comparing them with the names of the men most eminent in the Church of England, now occupied in the various and important discussions which are being carried on within her walls; and he will then see such men as Mr. Newman, of Oxford, with

a living of only £38; and such men as Mr. Jones, of Newchurch, in Winwick, with an incumbency of only £101.

The life of Mr. Herbert was spent among the working clergy. He had felt with them how often the expense of attending an arch-deacon's dinner was a drawback on two months' charities, and had not less often had occasion to decline the invitations to the dinner-tables of his wealthy parishioners, because he could not conscientiously increase the bill of his tailor for a new suit of black. Many a time had he confessed with sorrow, though not with shame, that he was *really unable* to contribute to another charitable association, till the next quarterly salary should be paid, since otherwise he must be unjust for the sake of being generous. And if Mr. Herbert, with a small but regular income arising from his wife's dowry, had felt this, year after year with even increasing severity, how much more must it be felt by those who have no other income than their curacy to rely upon for support! Many a time do the wealthy squire and the noble lord invite the poor curate at Christmas to a sumptuous banquet, and *honour* him with their smiles and their toasts, when a ten-pound

note quietly sent in an envelope, without any name or parade, would have saved him from many a heart-ache and many a tear. It is *not* the hereditary poor of the parish who suffer. It is *not* the beggar, who, without shame, asks for alms, who is sad. But it is the gentleman, the scholar, the divine, the poor country curate, whose tastes are all refined, and in accordance with his station in life, but who is compelled to suffer a multitude of privations, that he may appear, if not at ease, at least not in want; and, above all, that he may administer to the necessities of his suffering flock.

It was on a cold, foggy, and gloomy day in the month of *November*, when even youth, with all its warmth, life, and hopes, is sad—and when age, with its decay, debility, and want of energy, is gloomy—that Mr. Herbert received from the Lord Chancellor the following note:—

*“ The Lord Chancellor requests the Rev. Mr. Herbert will favour him with a call to-morrow morning at half-past nine, wishing to confer with him on a matter of some importance.”*

Mr. Herbert had just made his arrangements

to proceed to a curacy in the west of England, where he expected to close his days. The letter startled him. He had solicited no favours, had never complained of neglect, had no personal acquaintance with the most admirable man who then held the seals, was engaged in no Chancery suit, and could not therefore comprehend the communication he had received. At one moment, he thought he had discovered a clue to the letter by remembering that he had been once appointed one of the guardians to an infant who had subsequently died; and at another, he felt convinced that the communication was intended for some other person of the same name—but the Christian name was correct, his style and title and his last curacy were accurately indicated; and it was most disturbedly that he slept that night. The next morning, though the weather was uncongenial, he was punctual at the residence of the Chancellor, who received him with all the kindness of an old friend; and, pressing his hand with great affection, whilst his head moved backwards and forwards with a regular, though nervous action, he said—

“ Mr. Herbert, I have heard of you very often, though I have never had the pleasure of

seeing you before. Mr. P . . . . has spoken of you not unfrequently. Your piety and zeal are well known, and ought long ere this to have secured you preferment. But you know how it is : those who are the most active in asking are the most successful ; and the importunate sometimes take precedence of the most worthy. I have the vicarage of ———, in Worcester-shire,\* at my disposal, and I beg you to accept it.”

Mr. Herbert was much affected. He saw in this event the hand of God ; but he was not less grateful to the pious and admirable Chancellor who had thus selected him. He expressed in brief, but eloquent language, his joy and his humility ; and retired to his closet to give vent in heartfelt thanksgivings for this provision, in his old age, for his wants and his infirmities. “ ‘*My God will supply all my need, hath been the maxim of my life,*’ said Mr. Herbert, “ *and all my need is indeed supplied.*” It was not a wealthy living, but it was more than sufficient for his wants. It was not a *very small* parish, but the duties were light indeed

\* Though Mr. Herbert has been styled, throughout this volume, the Vicar of the Malvern Hills, it is unnecessary to state that such was *not* the name of his vicarage.

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central spots, for the discussion of Church matters, would assist both rural deans and archdeacons, and lead to universal good. There is also another matter to be attended to, Sir, and that is the monthly assembling of the church-going Christian laity by the parochial clergy, to meet and converse on *all* Church matters. If this were attended to, churches would not fall into decay, church-yards would not be so far inferior to foreign Romish cemeteries, church-rates would not give so much trouble in collecting, the assessment of tithes would be better managed, Church societies would be better supported, and hospitals, dispensaries, schools, and savings' banks, would be more efficiently conducted and visited. Above all, Sir, speaking of discipline, *spiritual* functions should be as little as possible discharged by proxy. In some cases it is unavoidable; but if the episcopal and parochial system of the Church in England were followed up and followed out as it should be, there would be no necessity. Why do some men hold several livings? Because one living could not support them. Why does it sometimes occur that a clergyman will be prebendary in one diocese, chancellor in a second,

archdeacon in a third, and incumbent in a fourth? Because the episcopal and parochial system is *not carried out*. It is not the Church that is in error, but the government and people, who do not provide for its support.

*Biographer.* And yet how wonderfully the Church societies have improved, Sir, during the last few years, not only our old Catholic societies, as we often style them, but also those of a less ancient character.

*Vicar.* Yes, Sir, and I rejoice at it. But how much more would be done, if we had smaller dioceses, less extensive archdeaconries, multiplied rural deaneries, parishes divided with regard to population, clergy disseminated everywhere, uniting everywhere, acting with the laity, and exercising a holy and sacred influence over small and well watched over districts. There has been a vast deal of time lost by the Church, Sir, during the last half-century, and this time has to be made up. I shall not live to see the movement, but there will be one in favour of the Church; and Church' principles will be proclaimed once more as at the time of the Reformation. But then another danger will present itself, and that will be an inattention to Church doctrines.

Doctrines, sacraments, principles, and discipline should go hand in hand; and when this shall be brought about, and it will be, then *the Church* will again become what she was originally, the only true *pure* and *perfect* Apostolical Church of England. America, with her thousand sects and schisms, is a proof, Sir, that the increase of wild sectarianism is always the greatest in those countries where no *national* religion exists. To oppose such increase, it is necessary to have not a mysterious, not an intolerant, not a persecuting, but a State religion. It is not necessary to encourage mystery in religion, or superstition in its professors, in order to oppose rationalism; for Popery, so mysterious and so superstitious, is yet the mother of unbelief. The Church, Sir, is the bride, the wife, the beloved one of her Divine and ever-blessed Founder, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. And now (turning to myself, his children, and grandchildren, he said), “*Let us pray for the whole state of Christ’s Church militant here on earth;*” and falling on our knees with devout feelings of love and gratitude, we all offered up that admirable prayer preserved in our Communion Service, which embodies the petitions

of every Christian member of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The rest of the day was devoted to family harmony, joyous recreations, and harmless mirth, and the eightieth birth-day of the vicar of the Malvern Hills will never be forgotten on earth by any who were so happy and honoured as to be present on that memorable occasion. And as this "Chapter about the Church" is one of the fruits of that true Churchman's birth-day, may its publication tend to promote the spread of those principles, which are not less dear to the author, than to the subject of, "YOUR LIFE."



## CHAPTER IX.

INDIFFERENCE OF MR. HERBERT AND THE WORKING CLERGY  
TO PREFERMENT—BIBLE SOCIETY MEETINGS—CHURCH  
PRAYERS SHOULD BE INSISTED ON—OPPOSITION AT A  
COUNTRY ASSOCIATION—BOOK SOCIETIES—INADEQUATE  
CHURCH PREFERMENT OF MOST EMINENT CLERGY—LET-  
TER FROM A LORD CHANCELLOR—MR. HERBERT A VICAR  
—CLOSING SCENES—CHURCH PROSPECTS.

MR. HERBERT was one of those men, of whom there are so many to be found among our *working clergy*, who are indifferent to worldly gain, and inattentive to Church preferment. If it had been otherwise, the youngest son of a Lincoln squire, and the son-in-law of a tolerably wealthy London citizen, would not have remained a curate during so long a portion of his life. Bare competency was all he aspired to, and the riches he coveted were a *large portion* of Church usefulness. The property left to him by his father, he settled in equal portions on his children at their marriage; and the interest on his wife's dowry he appropriated to his own support. What he received

from the Church he gave back to it. The poor of his cure, the sick, the schools, and other charities of his parish, had always the first claim, and then Church societies followed, before those of a mixed or less specific character. But by Church societies he did not *only* mean the four great and old societies of the Catholic Church, but the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Church Missionary Society, and, in the latest period of his life, *The Pastoral Aid Society* received at once his alms and his prayers. Though he loved best the oldest friends of that Church, to whose interests and prosperity he devoted his being, yet he welcomed all new auxiliaries to the great cause of Christian progress and Church influence. On some points of *doctrine* he was liberal, but not lax, and, though he had Baxterian, rather than Calvinistic or Arminian views, yet he could love, as well as discriminate, and esteemed all his brother clergy of each division, whose conduct, both private and public, corresponded with their avowed creeds, and with their sacred office. He would often mourn over the separation which existed between excellent and admirable men in the Church on *secondary* questions, and would dwell with rapture on that

millennial period, which he confidently anticipated for the Church, when its divine Head should, on earth, govern it for a thousand years. When invited to speak at a Bible meeting he invariably attended. His reasons were unexceptionable: "If the society in this neighbourhood be truly Church in its arrangements and regulations," he would say, "then it is clearly my duty to assist a *Church* movement. And if, on the other hand, there is a tendency in it to *sectarianism*, either on the part of its officers, or in its discipline, then it is my duty, as a High Churchman, to lend all the little weight and influence I may possess to counteract the mischief, and keep it from extending too far." On the same principle, whenever invited to preside over such meetings, he invariably accepted the post of president, unless he perceived in the neighbourhood some one evidently better qualified in all respects to fill that office. On one occasion, in a small parish where dissenterism was in the ascendancy, Mr. Herbert was invited to preside over a Bible Association. He was aware that the local institution had become somewhat sectarian. But he knew *why*; the Church had left the dissenters to themselves, had allowed the association to fall under their

management, and the last clergyman, though named the treasurer, had afterwards declined to perform the duties of the office. The dissenters, therefore, viewed with some anxiety the arrival of a new curate, since the rector did not interfere in the question, was a non-resident, and left Mr. Herbert to decide on this, and on all similar matters, without any reference to himself. Invited by a letter from the committee, signed by the *one* remaining secretary, to take the chair at the next annual meeting, Mr. Herbert immediately accepted the proffered honour.

The day arrived. He found at the meeting few of those faces he had during the first three weeks of his residence in his new cure, been accustomed to see at church; but two or three dissenting ministers were particularly busy in all the arrangements for the evening, and the Report drawn up, which he cursorily looked over whilst the meeting was assembling, was full of sectarian and somewhat objectionable phraseology. Mr. Herbert was voted into the chair. He accepted the post, and commenced as follows :—

“ Christian friends and parishioners, you have kindly invited me to preside over this

*Bible Association.* You have done so, aware that I am a minister of *the old Catholic Church in England*. You have done so, believing, of course, that I love her constitution, discipline, and worship, and that, whilst I allow full liberty of conscience to all who differ from me, I am jealous of her ritual as of her doctrines and influence. Allow me then to commence the business of the evening by reading some extracts from our Evening Service and other prayers, and may our voices ascend to heaven as an acceptable evening sacrifice."

"*No, no*; this is not *our* habit," cried Mr. Batch, the Baptist minister; and then, turning to the persons collected together, he added, "the gentleman is to be excused; he is a stranger among us, and is not aware of *our* regulations."

"Christian friends," replied Mr. Herbert, "it is quite true that I am a stranger among you, and not less that I am unacquainted with your previous arrangements; but I cannot preside over any meeting *hostile* to the Church, and no meeting that is *friendly* to it can object to my proposal."

"I have the honour to be a Protestant dissenting minister," cried Mr. Hunt, a rather

violent and hot-headed scion of the family of the Brownists, and my conscience will not admit of my countenancing a *Church* from which I sincerely and most heartily separate. *Our* custom here, Sir, has invariably been to begin our meetings with a short address from the president or chairman, then to have the Report read, then to move and second the various resolutions, and then to wind all up with ‘*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.*’ ”

Mr. Herbert again rose.—“ Christian friends and parishioners, if it be your wish to continue this *prayerless* system of conducting the anniversaries of a *Bible Society*, I will withdraw. But if, feeling that we are ‘set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright,’ no—not even in our best doings—and that strength and protection from heaven are necessary to us as much on this evening of a *Bible Society Anniversary* as on any other occasion, you shall join with me in beseeching God to ‘keep His Church, and us His household, continually in His true religion ; that they who trust not to their own judgments, but to His wisdom, and lean only upon the hope of His heavenly grace, may evermore be defended

by His mighty power,' I shall continue with great pleasure to occupy the post to which you have invited me, and do my utmost to support the object we *ought* all to have in view, the spread of the Holy Scriptures."

"*We will meet you half-way*, Mr. Chairman," cried Mr. Batch, in a tone of protection and condescension; "You shall pray *extempore* with us, and so get rid of all difficulty. There are no prayers for Bible Society Meetings, you know, in *your* Prayer-book."

The bad taste and vulgarity of this speech did not disconcert Mr. Herbert, who rose and said—"I have no confidence, my friends, in *my own* prayers and my own wisdom, but I have very great confidence in the prayers and wisdom of the Church; and although there be no *form of prayer* for such *specific meetings* as those in which we are about to engage, yet may we not pray "that God may give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions: to take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that as there is but one body and one spirit, and one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all;

so we may henceforth be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity; and may with one mind and one mouth glorify God through Jesus Christ our Lord?"

"*Yes—yes,*" exclaimed some pious and poor Wesleyans at the extremity of the long room where the meeting was assembled—and Mr. Batch and Mr. Hunt looked confounded.

"My respected friends," said a tall, thin, pale, quiet-looking man, who was evidently annoyed by such a discussion, "are you aware what you are debating about? It is whether a *Bible* meeting shall begin with *prayer*?"

"No, no," said Mr. Batch, "that is *not* the question—but whether it shall begin with *Church* prayers?"

"It is the same question," said the tall man, "for Church prayers are *prayers* at any rate—and what prayer can be more truly sublime or suitable than the prayer for *unity* which has just been repeated in your hearing?"

"Let those who are in favour of the **CHURCH** prayers being read, now stand up," cried Mr. Hunt, expecting, no doubt, by this most disorderly act on his part, to get rid of the proposal of Mr. Herbert; but, to his dismay as



well as surprise, nearly all the assembly rose, and Mr. Herbert read a selection of suitable prayers from the Church service. From that moment dissent flagged, and sectarianism became unpopular in the parish; the Wesleyans changed their hours of preaching, to those in which there were no Church prayers; and the Local Bible Society became a powerful auxiliary to the Church itself. This will *always* be the case, when, instead of keeping aloof from meetings for *general* religious objects, the clergy shall come forward to sanction all that is good *in principle*, and to remove by their wisdom, learning, piety, and prudence, all that is objectionable in the *manner* in which that principle may be carried out. •

Mr. Herbert always felt, though only a curate, that whenever the incumbent was absent or unable to attend to his clerical duties, *he* was the spiritual head of the parish, and, as such spiritual head, that there were duties which devolved on him, not included in the daily labours of a parish priest. He gave a moral and religious tone to "Book Societies," obtained the exclusion of works hostile to the established religion of the country, and kept infidelity, Popery, and dissent at bay.

In small, as in great matters, Mr. Herbert was ever watchful over the interests and rights of the Church. He knew, and felt, that the clergyman is the *only* man in a parish who has the *right* to go unasked into every house, knock at every chamber door, and seek to gain admittance into every heart. Of this privilege he ever availed himself. He thus identified the Church, with the family, altar, Church interests with family interests, and taught men to feel that they were bound to rejoice when the Church rejoiced, and to weep when she wept. It is one of the defects, not of the Church itself, or of its original constitution, but of the inattention paid by the government and the legislators of this country to its established clergy, that such a man as Mr. Herbert, so active, zealous, wise, devoted, should have remained so long a *curate*. But that which happened to him, occurs constantly to hundreds, if not to thousands. He belonged to no political party : *i. e.* to no agitating party. He was always a conservative, but he refused to put forward his politics as a stepping-stone to preferment. If the old *parochial* system were carried out, with an adequate number of churches, clergy, endowments, and glebe